

# SHAPING THE FUTURE

**CASE STUDIES IN ADAPTATION AND REUSE  
IN HISTORIC URBAN ENVIRONMENTS**



*An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta*  
**Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

CONTEXTS  
CHALLENGES  
SOLUTIONS  
LESSONS



*An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta  
Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht*

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Every effort has been made to include appropriate credits for each project; any omissions are regretted and if brought to the Department's attention will be corrected in any future publication.



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# FOREWORD





The quality of our built environment profoundly affects the quality of our everyday lives. This fact is one of the key drivers behind the design, and continual regeneration, of our surroundings, and is also the reason why so few of us are passive when it comes to holding and expressing a view on the quality of the built environment in our localities.

As Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, I hold the view that the natural and built heritage of Ireland is a national asset. This national asset has always made an important contribution to the economic activity of communities at both local and regional level. Now, there is a growing awareness of the economic potential of the historic environment and the benefits that arise from investing in our built, natural and cultural heritage, especially for the communities which are the custodians of that heritage.

Furthermore, cultural tourism has been identified in the Programme for Government as an important element of Ireland's tourism product, and our built heritage is a key tourism attraction in that regard. The

protection and enhancement of our built heritage plays a major role in increasing Ireland's attractiveness as a tourism destination. Utilising this resource will assist in underpinning and advancing economic activity at a local level. This can be achieved by promoting the enhancement of our built heritage in the policies included in each city and county development plan.

However, the protection and forward management of the architectural heritage of an area should not be seen just as an end in itself. It should also be viewed as a foundation for giving a truly distinctive sense of place and identity to our cities, towns and villages. As is demonstrated in the attached case studies, successful development plan policies for the built heritage are those which have been integrated into the broader planning context and sustainable development of an area. An integrated approach allowing conservation practice to be part of distinctive and successful planning should also explore innovative technical and planning practices applicable and appropriate to both historic settings and structures.

This adaptation and reuse manual is at the centre of the *Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015* which provides the appropriate framework for architectural policy nationally. I am impressed by the level of innovative practice as outlined in this manual and its case studies and as a result I can only look forward to seeing a renewed commitment by all stakeholders to utilising our heritage assets into the future both in a sustainable and responsible way.

**Jimmy Deenihan, T.D.**  
**Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

# INTRODUCTION

Shaping the Future – setting appropriate strategies in place

## BACKGROUND

The *Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015* provides the framework for architectural policy nationally and is coordinated centrally by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. It places an emphasis on sustainable development and urban design and incorporates architectural heritage in an integrated manner while encouraging and supporting high quality modern architecture. This adaptation and reuse manual has been developed in response to Action 23 of the *Government Policy on Architecture*.

Securing the sustainable future of our existing national assets - physical, social and environmental - is today at the heart of policy on the built environment. Since publication of the *National Spatial Strategy* in 2002, policies, strategies and plans at national, regional and local level have focused on imperatives to renew, consolidate and strengthen the nation's cities, towns and villages – including objectives to keep them physically compact and contained. Also, promoting their vitality and viability is firmly established as a key component in the task of delivering sustainable development, economic competitiveness, efficient infrastructure and environmental protection.

Similarly, national planning policy provides for the protection and conservation of urban places of special interest. Since the introduction of legislation under Part IV of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended, planning authorities are required to protect significant buildings and structures, while provision is made to protect the character of places and townscapes

of special architectural, historic, social and other interest - by designating them as architectural conservation areas.

These provisions echo those in the major international charters and conventions on both architectural heritage and urban development. Since the 1960s, the interrelationship between buildings and their urban settings, and integration of the protection of architectural heritage into town planning processes, have been key objectives of European policy on the built environment.

The 1964 ICOMOS *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (The Venice Charter) which built on the work of nineteenth and early twentieth-century conservationists, expanded the concept of an historic monument to 'embrace not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilisation, a significant development or an historic event' (Article 1). Article 11 states that 'the valid contributions of all periods to the building of a monument must be respected, since unity of style is not the aim of a restoration'. It may be noted that the Charter of Venice differed from the work of earlier writers on conservation principles who, since the 1890s, had categorised monuments into two types: dead monuments 'belonging to a past civilisation or serving obsolete purposes' and living monuments, 'those continuing to serve the purpose for which they were originally intended'. However in Britain and Ireland today ancient/national monuments and listed buildings/protected structures remain protected under separate legal codes.

To an extent some of the articles of the Venice Charter are of their time and need to be read in conjunction with more recent ICOMOS documents such as the Burra Charter (1976 and later revisions) and the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994). More recently ICCROM, a sister-organisation of ICOMOS under the UNESCO umbrella, has provided a forum for the development of ideas beyond the Venice Charter's concept of authenticity in purely material terms towards giving greater weight to community authenticity.

Prior to the publication of the Venice Charter, the Irish Local Government (Planning and Development Act) 1963 made provision in development plans for planning authorities to list for preservation 'buildings of artistic, architectural or historic interest' though this was not mandatory. Also in 1963, the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe took the initiative in promoting European intergovernmental co-operation for the safeguarding and the development of the cultural heritage of monuments and sites, with a view to preparing a European convention. In September 1975 the committee of ministers adopted the *European Charter of the Architectural Heritage*. Its principles, incorporated in a declaration made at the Congress of Amsterdam, held as part of European Architectural Heritage Year, highlighted the need to integrate conservation in town planning, preserve groups of historic buildings and their environment, and take the heritage into account as a part of economic and social life. *The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (The Granada Convention) which followed these processes, was opened for signature in October

[1]

1985. The convention extended the definition of architectural heritage beyond monuments, buildings and structures of 'conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest' to include groups of urban or rural, buildings and sites which are 'sufficiently distinctive and homogenous to form topographically definable units'.

The Granada Convention was ratified by Ireland in 1997, following which the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1999 and the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act were placed on the statute book.

Today the concept of the historic built environment is much broader than that understood by nineteenth-century conservationists whose focus was predominantly on individual monuments, particularly those of significant scale and importance. It is a place where people live and work or visit and stay, and is composed for the most part of more modest buildings in everyday use. It is this broader environment which Part IV of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, seeks to protect by way of legislation and guidance. The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's conservation principles are set out in Chapter 7 of the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2004, reissued 2011).

[1] Cork Lifetime Lab – former Cork city waterworks



[1]



While the guidelines do not purport to be a legal interpretation of the conventions, acts, regulations or procedures mentioned therein, their aim is to assist planners and others in understanding the current guiding principles of conservation and restoration. The introduction to the guidelines states (1.1.2) 'sympathetic maintenance, adaptation and reuse can allow the architectural heritage to yield aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits even where the original use may no longer be viable. The creative challenge is to find appropriate ways to satisfy the requirements of a structure to be safe, durable and useful on the one hand, and to retain its character and special interest on the other'.

More recently, the 2007 *Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities* emphasises that Europe's architectural heritage includes not only historic buildings, but also public spaces. Preservation of this heritage - and its urban and architectural values - must be safeguarded, the charter states, both for its impact on the quality of life of urban populations, and for its role as a soft locational factor in attracting knowledge-based industries, qualified and creative workforces, and tourism to locate in particular cities and their surroundings.

This adaptation and reuse manual is intended to build on and aid guidance on appropriate strategies from the macro to the micro urban level, regarding the conservation and adaptation of places.

## KEY PRINCIPLES OF URBAN REUSE

Various international conventions have informed and influenced government policy and legislation for protecting the architectural heritage. These arise from a sustained attempt to articulate, at international level, principles that would inform decisions about how the cultural value of the built environment is to be treated.

Emphasis on urban design, public realm renewal and urban conservation of place requires a specific contextual response to each proposal and with that careful consideration is needed of each proposed modern insertion or new use.

The manual encourages planning authorities to include policies to promote quality design in their development and local area plans – and to implement these policies through the development management process. Clearly defined design policies give greater clarity and certainty to developers and their design teams and provide an agenda for pre-application discussion and the subsequent development management process.

Key principles of urban design and conservation of places are set out which might form the framework for policies to promote quality design in both development and local area plans. In summary these are:

- » To understand and address the existing environment which makes up our cities, towns and villages while responding to this *context* with appropriate planning strategies at a macro level prior to detailed development of proposals;

- » Using the principles of urban design to develop an interrelationship between the open spaces that comprise the public realm and the buildings that occupy and shape these spaces by way of an *urban design framework*
- » The creation of successful urban places is not only about buildings: it is just as much about the quality of the streets, squares, parks and other open spaces that comprise the public realm and responding to this by way of *qualitative public realm strategies*;
- » The continued commitment to the ‘highest standards in the protection, conservation, and maintenance of the historic built environment’ as set out in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines by way of the sympathetic *conservation, adaptation and reuse* of historic buildings.

## PURPOSE OF THE ADAPTATION AND REUSE MANUAL

This manual is a step towards the examination of design principles within the planning policy guidance framework outlined under Action 21 of the *Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015* by way of showing a selection of examples of what has been happening in recent years in Ireland in terms of reuse, from the objectives of town and area plans to building case studies. The study is not intended to be exhaustive nor is it intended to say that solutions which may suit a particular case are universally applicable, each case is different. They are presented as contributions to the debate, describing the aims and objectives of the parties involved. The publication sets out to inform planning

authorities, developers and designers that evidence-based quality principles will ensure that future planning of our historic cities, towns and villages is focused on the creation of vibrant, quality places.

As showcased in the manual, design needs to be applied by skilled practitioners. There is no substitute for engaging the right skills to achieve successful outcomes. The delivery of a high quality environment requires first and foremost a clear vision and design brief, plus a commitment to an overall quality agenda shared by planning authorities, developers and designers – both public and private. The appointment of a high-quality, professional design team is a key step in ensuring successful outcomes. In particular, integrated design teams should have the skills and competencies appropriate to the development.

## SUMMARY

Heritage-led regeneration through reuse presents an opportunity to encourage the enhancement and protection of both the existing built heritage and the wider historic building stock. Part of that protection will encompass renovation and renewal in order to accommodate new and current uses, which in turn should enhance the longevity of the structures concerned.

In conclusion, the sustainable management and conservation of Ireland’s built heritage can assist in the country’s continued economic recovery. Incorporating specific and coherent policies in the development plan process can assist in this regard, as outlined in the various case studies in this manual.

[2]



This goes beyond protection of an area’s built heritage or the preservation of the character of a locality as ends in themselves. The built environment, including structures of architectural heritage merit, has been constantly adapted to accommodate new societal needs and requirements. There is a need to properly integrate this heritage into future plan-making and forward planning strategies. This approach will support local communities in their quest for development and adaptation, while retaining the qualities and values linked to their history and the collective memory of their locality.

[1] Dublin Dental Hospital – adaptive reuse of 18th century townhouses

[2] Coppinger Court, Cork – internal courtyard

# CONTEXT

[1]



Ireland has inherited a historic built environment of exceptional quality – not only the forts, cairns, towers, monasteries, castles and great houses of the rural landscape, but also the civic, cultural, commercial and residential buildings which make up our cities, towns and villages.

In an increasingly globalised world, the importance of ‘placemaking’ and local identity is not to be underestimated. Based on the uniqueness of place, the concept of local identity is underpinned by an area’s topography, geomorphology and natural features, together with its built environment - both historic and contemporary - its open spaces, land use patterns and spatial organisations, visual relationships, and various other elements, both urban or rural. Local identity also includes social and cultural practices and values, many of which may appear intangible and transient but are no less real, such as sporting events, cultural festivals or town and country markets.

A significant part of local identity is the existence of built heritage features which provide a continuing sense of the familiar. They may be fifty years old or two hundred, but have in common the state of being both local and familiar. These features, both large and small, can be used as focal points to incrementally build an identity within the changed setting of recent development. In addition, a strong sense of local identity and a manifest sense of place will likely give rise to the ambience that visitors find attractive and assist in expanding the tourist base.

It could be said that the city and the town rank among man’s most celebrated achievements in the worlds of art, music, literature and

science. In Ireland, notwithstanding our deep-rooted tradition of dispersed settlement, the nation’s cities, towns and villages are the nuclei of both their indigenous communities and their local hinterlands. Even the most fervent champions of our rural heritage acknowledge that the likes of Eyeries, Birr, Cobh, Westport, Kilkenny and Cork are vitally important expressions of our history and culture, and the promotion of the country as a destination for inward investment and, not least, tourism. However, the future of Ireland’s historic urban places cannot be taken for granted without concerted action by all stakeholders – including government, local authorities, property owners, business interests and community groups.

Securing the sustainable future of these national assets - physical, social and environmental - is today at the heart of policy on the built environment. Since publication of the *National Spatial Strategy* in 2002, policies, strategies and plans at national, regional and local level have focused on imperatives to renew, consolidate and strengthen the nation’s cities, towns and villages – including objectives to keep them physically compact and contained. Also, promoting their vitality and viability is firmly established as a key component in the task of delivering sustainable development, economic competitiveness, efficient infrastructure and environmental protection.

The *Government Policy on Architecture 2009-15* is an opportune reiteration of the imperative to focus forward planning on the need to integrate urban and landscape design, urban and building conservation and architectural quality in the creation of sustainable

communities and a high quality built environment. The policy highlights the importance of locational criteria and ‘place-making’ – places with their own distinct quality and character – at every level in the planning and development management process.

While the statutory development plan will contain overarching objectives for the conservation of protected structures and the preservation of the character of places of special interest, it is often in local area plans, or non-statutory framework strategies and masterplans – that local authorities set out their key visions and more detailed policies for delivering the objectives of higher level plans – including those for the management of change in urban environments of ‘architectural, historic, social, archaeological, social and other interest’.

The case studies featured in this section demonstrate aspects of plan-making at the level of historic city centres – *The Cork Historic Centre Action Plan* and *The Kilkenny Local Area Plan* – and at the level of an urban neighbourhood – *The Liberties Local Area Plan*. They each reflect aspects of best practice in formulating an overarching vision for their respective area, and identification of the strategies and actions required to address the dual challenges of balancing development objectives with heritage protection in the delivery of high quality built environments and sustainable communities in historic urban places.

A key lesson is that each incorporated the input of key stakeholders – elected members, local officials, service providers, statutory bodies, business interests and community groups. Also, instead of being merely written statements, they set out

key planning objectives in graphic format, including – for example – guidance on the design of streets, public spaces and built form, plus priorities for density and uses, and the importance of architectural quality in the integration of new development into historic urban environments.

Secondly, they have each been prepared by integrated and multi-disciplinary teams - the appointment of a high quality project team is a key step in ensuring successful outcomes. Depending on the scale and complexity of the local area plan, framework or masterplan, the project team will comprise a range of professional inputs - including planners, architects, engineers, architectural conservation officers and landscape, traffic, archaeology, ecology and conservation consultants.

Finally, while predating the adoption of the 2009 *Government Policy on Architecture*, they each reflect one of the policy’s specific objectives: to have quality-led provisions incorporated into both statutory and non-statutory plans generated by planning authorities, including objectives to promote high standards of architecture and urban design – the objective being to ensure that new development in urban areas meets national policy objectives for the pursuit of quality design and construction, and the promotion of a sustainable built environment.

[2]



[1] Cork Historic Centre Action Plan – detail plan

[2] Liberties Local Area Plan – street view.



The *Cork Historic Area Action Plan* set out a vision for regeneration of the city's historic centre, addressing issues around restoring the area's economic and commercial vitality, and reversing the decline which had affected the city's medieval core for generations – putting much of its historic built environment in a precarious state of preservation.

## Context

### CORK HISTORIC CENTRE ACTION PLAN

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
CORK CORPORATION AND  
URBAN INITIATIVES

**CLIENT:**  
CORK CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:**  
1994

#### CONTEXT

The historic centre of Cork city contains one of the richest concentrations of built heritage in Ireland. Effectively an island development in the Lee, the history of the medieval city can still be read in its urban plan, built form and in its architectural character. It has retained many of its historic townhouses, some fine municipal architecture and many of the warehouses which supported the city's economy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Also, with few exceptions, it has retained its medium-rise skyline and its fine-grain urban structure.

#### CHALLENGE

In the early 'nineties, the historic centre encapsulated many of the problems facing cities everywhere – both in Ireland and abroad: increased tendencies for retailing, commercial and other development to relocate out of the centre, leaving dereliction and blight behind. Similarly, with people moving to housing in the suburbs, the indigenous communities in the centre were in decline, in some cases leaving only the poor and disadvantaged behind.

These conditions set the city council the challenge of defining a new vision for the historic centre, and the task of reviving its social and economic vitality, reversing the decline which had left much of its historic fabric in a precarious state of preservation.



[1]



**SOLUTION**

Commissioned by Cork City Council, and adopted as a non-statutory document in 1994, the *Cork Historic Centre Action Plan* was funded with EU assistance under the *Conservation of European Cities Programme*. The plan sought to address the challenges facing the medieval core in an integrated manner: not only by formulating a clear vision for its future role within the mainstream of Cork’s social and economic life, but also by developing innovative multi-faceted strategies to enable the area to reach its full potential - socially, economically and environmentally - and thereby becoming a more attractive place for residents, visitors and investors alike.

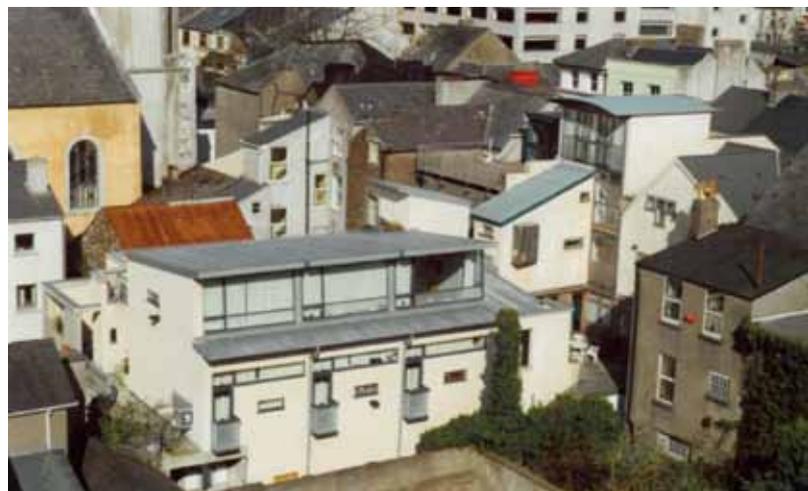
The plan paid particular emphasis to the importance of a high quality physical environment, based on the accepted reality that residents are unlikely to be attracted back to the city centre if it offers a poor quality public realm. If it is to be successful, the plan stated, city living needs high quality streets and public spaces, coupled with exemplary management and improved safety and security. Therefore the development of a public realm strategy was prioritised - to deliver the high quality ‘European-style’ living environment envisaged for the area to succeed as a sustainable city neighbourhood.

It recognised that regeneration could not be implemented by the public sector alone, and that a market-led approach would be unlikely to deliver results without development incentives. The plan therefore proposed alternative partnership mechanisms between the public and private sectors to pump-prime regeneration projects - both to access EU structural funds and to avail of the development tax incentives existing at that time. It also used the limited public funds available to deliver key

demonstration projects, thereby creating the conditions necessary to attract private investment into the area.

Emphasising that mixed-use and higher density development supports people living closer to the services required for everyday life, the plan contained a range of strategies to make efficient use of the large tracts of vacant land within the urban fabric. However, it also contained clear guidance to ensure that new development was compatible with the fine grain urban structure of the area and it strongly promoted reuse of the area’s historic building stock - particularly addressing the challenge of reversing the chronic underutilisation of vacant upper-level floorspace in the study area.

The plan also highlighted the need to promote a new attitude towards conservation of the area’s architectural heritage – not only for its own sake, but also to give the medieval core a new identity and to generate the sense of place which would be critical to the success of the city council’s regeneration policies. To this end, a number of demonstration



[4]

The Historic Centre Action Plan set out a vision to restore the social vitality and economic vibrancy of the medieval core.

projects were proposed, including conversion of vacant warehouse spaces, adaptation of upper floors to residential apartments, plus some key landmark projects involving the conservation and reuse of significant historic buildings within the study area.

Finally, the action plan recognised the importance of a movement framework which would address problems related to the adverse environmental impacts of traffic - both within the study area and in the city centre generally. Acknowledging that regeneration of the historic core was dependent on a broader urban traffic plan, it nevertheless proposed a number of local traffic calming measures and associated improvements to the pedestrian environment.

[2]



[3]



**LESSONS**

Adopted in 1994, The *Cork Historic Centre Action Plan* was ahead of its time in addressing the challenges facing the medieval core, and in defining a vision to address the task of reversing the decline which had effected the area for decades. Its key lesson is the need for an integrated approach to regeneration: involving all stakeholders in innovative development processes; combining heritage conservation with sensitive adaptation of historic buildings; promoting sympathetic contemporary design, infill mixed-use developments; bringing residential life back by making use of vacant upper floors; and implementing environmental improvements to improve the quality of the public realm. A further important lesson is that many of the plan's key recommendations have been successfully delivered.

- [1] Interior of St. Peter's Church converted to the Cork Vision Centre
- [2] New 'link' staircase in Christchurch converted to Triskel Arts Centre
- [3] St. Peter's Church – front elevation
- [4] Backland infill housing, North Main St.
- [5] 'Living over the shop' in adaptive reuse project, North Main St.



[5]



## Context

### KILKENNY LOCAL AREA PLAN

**PROJECT TEAM:**

O'MAHONY PIKE

**CLIENT:**

KILKENNY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**DATE:**

2004

**CONTEXT**

Kilkenny city is designated a hub in the 2002 *National Spatial Strategy*; it is the main commercial, cultural and residential centre for a large rural hinterland. It is also synonymous with heritage; its principal monuments – the castle, cathedral and town hall – and its historic fabric and medieval streetscape are unique in the Irish context. The city has a vibrant cultural and artistic community, adding to its attractiveness as a place to live and work, and also as a tourist destination for visitors – both Irish and international.

**CHALLENGE**

The 2002 *Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan* recognised that while the large population increase envisaged for the decades ahead would take place outside the historic city's limits, this growth would nevertheless increase the demand for services and facilities within the city centre, and the city would need to prepare for these challenges by preparing an integrated strategy for the urban core; one which would strike a balance between accommodating the quantum of development expected and protecting its unique historic heritage, while also retaining the vitality and ambience required to provide a high quality of life for its residents.





## SOLUTION

To address the various challenges facing the city, Kilkenny Borough Council commissioned a statutory local area plan as the vehicle to provide a framework that would ensure the continued vitality and viability of the historic city accommodating proposed new development within, rather than outside, the inner core, and illustrate how this could be achieved without negative impacts on the historic urban environment – by including land use and urban design frameworks for key sites as specific objectives within the statutory plans.

Adopted by the elected members in 2005, the LAP concentrated on a number of key themes including, inter alia: traffic management initiatives to improve vehicular and pedestrian linkages; preparing land-use and urban design frameworks for key sites; protecting the architectural and archaeological heritage; improving the quality of the core area retail offer; enhancing the quality of the city's public realm with a network of quality open spaces.

While the plan had due regard for the needs of traffic for access and servicing, it emphasised that vehicular movement must be accommodated in a manner compatible with improving the city's connectivity and accessibility for all; the historic centre

contains Kilkenny's core retail area and its principal tourist trails, and it must therefore be both attractive, safe and convenient for pedestrians both able and disabled and cyclists.

A vital element of the plan was the articulation of policies to integrate urban extensions and interventions in the existing fabric with protection of the integrity of Kilkenny's historic core - in terms of use and built form, plus improving the vitality and viability of existing streets and squares with appropriate new uses – particularly retail and residential development, plus a quantum of leisure uses such as cafés, pubs and restaurants.

Urban design policies aimed at improving the city's public realm were based on a number of key principles: pedestrian routes should provide direct and convenient linkages between the places where people want to go; they should be comfortable, with footways which are safe, well-lit and free of obstructions; they should be attractive with quality landscaping and planting; they should be legible and easy to follow with explanatory and directional signage along key routes.

A key objective in the plan was the reinstatement of the Castle Parade as a major civic amenity space for the city. The Parade provides the main approach to Kilkenny Castle and is the city's largest, most prominent open space. It had become something of an eyesore, especially due to the large volumes of coach and visitor parking it contained. Accordingly, an international architectural competition was organised to secure a co-ordinated design approach to the improvement and re-organisation of the space as a major amenity and civic space for the city. The Parade was

The Kilkenny Local Area Plan sought to achieve a balance between preserving its architectural and archaeological heritage, while ensuring the city's continued vitality and viability as a place to live, work and visit.

[1]

successfully completed and has won prestigious awards for its designers - GKMP architects.

### LESSONS

The *Kilkenny Local Area Plan* was undertaken to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the population growth and scale of development anticipated for the decades ahead, and the need for Kilkenny Borough Council to formulate a comprehensive vision to guide this development in a manner which would both protect and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre with a sustainable mix of land uses and urban design policies which would provide for the growth anticipated, while safeguarding the unique heritage of the city.

An important lesson from the LAP is the importance of setting out key development objectives for specific key sites within the plan area, and illustrating these with urban design frameworks indicating key principles such as the uses proposed, and the form, scale, height and density of development envisaged for each. In the specific case of the Parade, the objectives in the LAP formed the design brief for the architectural competition - objectives which were substantially delivered in the completed scheme.

[1] View of the remodelled Parade – result of international architecture competition in response to a specific objective in the LAP

[2] Rothe House – a medieval townhouse restored as major tourist destination for the city

3] Market Cross Shopping Centre – use of backland site for infill retail development



[2]



## Context

### THE LIBERTIES LOCAL AREA PLAN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

JOHN THOMPSON & PARTNERS

#### CLIENT:

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2009

#### CONTEXT

The Liberties is one of Dublin city's most recognisable urban neighbourhoods - one with its own character and identity, and a strong indigenous community. The Liberties has a rich concentration of built heritage - from the religious institutions of the medieval era, through the brewery and distillery buildings of the nineteenth century, up to the philanthropic housing developments of the twentieth century.

The 2000 transformation of the landmark Market Street storehouse into the Guinness Storehouse Experience, and designation of the area as home to the Digital Hub, were significant votes of confidence in the Liberties' potential to become an exciting, attractive and liveable city quarter.

#### CHALLENGE

Like many inner-city areas, the Liberties experienced significant change in the second half of the twentieth century. The decline of traditional manufacturing industries changed its fortunes, resulting in high vacancy rates, dereliction and blight, and with it knock-on effects on the area's economy and social structure, which in turn impacted negatively on its reputation and image. In addition, the large numbers of speculative apartments in the area were often of poor quality and inappropriate to their context.

As a result, one of the key challenges identified in the LAP public consultation process was how to strike a balance between preserving what is valuable and cherished, using the heritage of the area as a positive asset, while promoting the type and quantum of development that would enable the Liberties to achieve its potential as an attractive and dynamic city quarter.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The 2009 *Liberties Local Area Plan* sets out a vision to guide the regeneration of the Liberties as a thriving city quarter and home to a strong inclusive community - with high quality homes, schools, community and social infrastructure, and streets, squares and parks offering an excellent quality of life for visitors and residents alike.

The 2009 LAP sought to define the framework to achieve the social, economic and physical regeneration of one of Dublin's most identifiable city quarters. It aimed to define the strategies required to achieve these goals by establishing a coordinated approach based on the *Six Themes* identified by Dublin City Council as integral to the future development of the city: economic, social, cultural, form, movement and sustainability.

Within the Liberties there are a number of distinct character areas. The plan identified development opportunities within each, along with key urban design objectives to guide the design of new buildings and spaces - including smaller infill sites and possibilities for the adaptive reuse of the historic building stock. It sought to ensure that the character of the area would be enhanced by contemporary and high quality design in new development - thereby creating the legacy of the future, while enhancing the heritage of one of the oldest parts of Dublin.

In particular, the plan sought to ensure that new buildings would respect their surroundings, particularly any impact on important heritage buildings, spaces, landmarks and views. It allowed for limited new tall buildings only where these would contribute to the creation of

a distinctive skyline that, on the one hand, would respect existing views and landmarks and, on the other, signify the location of important civic spaces and activities.

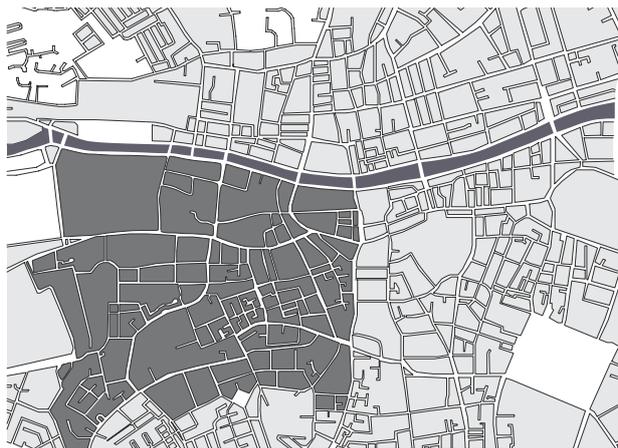
In relation to heritage, the LAP set out a vision of the Liberties as a place where historic buildings would be protected and conserved, not only for themselves, but also for their potential to contribute to making the area a great place to live, work and visit. Recognising that much had already been lost or compromised by inappropriate development, one of the plan's overarching objectives was a proposal for the creation of an architectural conservation area.

The Liberties is seriously deficient in open space provision, and the public realm is not of the quality one would expect in the vicinity of Ireland's most visited tourist attraction - the Guinness Storehouse. The plan emphasised the importance of its public realm strategy, and proposals to create a hierarchy of spaces that would reinforce the area's sense of place and identity, and be attractive, multi-functional, safe, welcoming and accessible for residents, visitors, workers and tourists alike.

Finally, public consultation was a major component in drafting the plan. The process commenced with the launch of the *Liberties Regeneration Project*, which was attended by representatives of residents associations, business interests, service providers and community groups. A key outcome of the consultation process was the establishment of the Liberties Public Forum which received regular presentations on the drafts of the plan as they developed throughout the LAP process - thereby ensuring the successful adoption of the plan by the elected members.

The LAP was based on developing a coordinated approach based on the City Council's *Six Themes*: economic, social, cultural, form, movement and sustainability.

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**LESSONS**

The *Liberties Local Area Plan* was adopted by Dublin City Council in May 2009. It set out a vision to achieve the social, economic and physical regeneration of the area, and to re-shape the Liberties as an attractive and liveable city quarter, which would contribute to economic prosperity - at the local, city and national level. The plan recognised the special character of the Liberties, and sought to strike an appropriate balance between protection of its distinct character and heritage, and providing for the quantum and form of development required to secure the Liberties' regeneration as a sustainable urban neighbourhood. Preparation of the plan involved the integration of many different inputs within the city council and the community. Ensuring that all the relevant stakeholders were involved at the right time was a key ingredient in securing the successful adoption of the plan.

- [1] 'Living over the shop' adaptive reuse of Francis St. commercial premises
- [2] Liberties Local Area Plan – map of LAP study area
- [3] Conversion of former industrial buildings to modern office use for the Digital Hub
- [4] Integration of contemporary development into historic settings



[4]

# URBAN STRUCTURE

[1]



Urban design has been described as the art of giving form to the interrelationship between the buildings and the open spaces that make up urban places. However, at a more detailed level, it is the urban structure – the interplay between streets and squares, solid and void, blocks and buildings, routes and destinations – that most defines the form and shape of cities, towns and villages, and thus their character and quality.

The 1987 ICOMOS *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas* (the Washington Charter) was drafted specifically to address the fact that historic urban places were being ‘threatened, physically degraded, damaged or even destroyed by the impact of urban development’. It recommends that the conservation of historic

urban environments should be an integral part of urban and regional planning - and of economic and social development policies. Among the qualities specifically listed for protection in the charter are ‘urban patterns as defined by lots and streets’ and ‘the relationships between buildings and open spaces’ – i.e. the urban structure of historic cities, towns and villages.

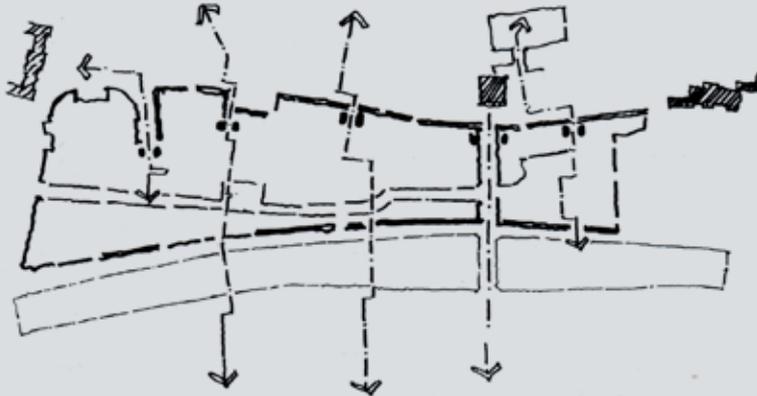
In the history of urbanism, the urban structure of cities, towns and villages has been shaped by two basic typologies - the street and the square. In Ireland, whether in the organic informality of places with early origins like Kells, Athenry or Viking Dublin, or in the rational layouts of planned settlements such as Portarlington, Mitchelstown or Georgian Limerick, the historic patterns of streets and squares still form the backbone

of their urban structure: streets provide the connections between destinations, both locally and further afield; squares accommodate the civic and social events that are the heart of public life; and the configuration of individual plots establishes the scale and form of the buildings that give each place its own unique character and identity.

Through much of the last century, the validity of these typologies was challenged as town planning sought alternatives to the unhealthy and overcrowded conditions of nineteenth century industrialised cities. However, at least since the 1961 publication of Jane Jacobs’ *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, there has been a renewed engagement with the value of streets and squares in the shaping of urban places. Her book has become a landmark whose influence endures to this day: both for addressing the issues causing degeneration in urban places, and for its prescription of the remedies required to reverse the decline – diversity, mixed uses, small blocks, aged buildings and concentration of people. She devotes an entire chapter to the subject of urban structure - ‘The Need for Small Blocks’, in which she makes the case that small blocks and frequent intersections, i.e. a permeable urban structure, are essential to the vitality and vibrancy of urban neighbourhoods.

Small blocks and the ‘fine-grain’ urban structure they generate, are arguably also the most efficient use of urban land, and the best balance between density, daylight and microclimate. While there are no fixed rules on the ideal dimensions for streets and blocks, the scale of grid and built form typical of historic urban areas has proven to be capable of generating the development

[2]



densities and the concentrations of people required to support their vitality and vibrancy. In addition, the average height-to-width ratios found in these places create favourable microclimate conditions – i.e. an optimum compromise between daylight, solar gain and shelter from prevailing winds, thereby enhancing the comfort and attractiveness of the urban environment.

In terms of adaptability and flexibility, cognisance should be taken of the sequential approach for historic centres set out in the *Retail Planning Guidelines* (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012). Smaller blocks and a fine-grain structure can accommodate a range of building typologies. Where appropriate in terms of stimulating the overall regeneration of an historic urban area, sympathetic new interventions might consist of one or more of the following: individual large buildings such as office or shopping developments, perhaps with an internal atrium; perimeter housing around a central courtyard garden; or a sensitive amalgamation of individual narrow-frontage plots. Also, small-blocks can be subdivided into even smaller units with intersecting pedestrian passages; or they can be left vacant as gardens or public spaces. In certain circumstances,

individual blocks might even be amalgamated to provide for larger units of accommodation, which might otherwise not be capable of being located in a historic urban area.

Urban structure also determines the movement framework of places, and therefore their accessibility and connectivity – those that are easy to get to and to move about are more competitive, more attractive and more sustainable. Government policy supports development that is focused on locations that are accessible by sustainable travel modes - public transport, walking and cycling. The continued growth of private motoring is unsustainable on account of its negative impacts in terms of traffic congestion, air pollution and environmental quality. However, the economic delivery of quality public transport and infrastructure demands certain thresholds of density and concentration. Compact, dense, mixed-use and walkable neighbourhoods with a fine-grain urban structure are now considered to be the basic building blocks in the design of sustainable urban communities.

The case study projects – Dublin's Temple Bar, Sligo's Courthouse Block and Westport Plan 2000 – illustrate approaches to enhancing the urban structures of their historic

locations, largely based on the design principles outlined: increasing density and diversity of uses; improving pedestrian permeability and connectivity; and exploiting the potential of under-utilised backland sites - and old buildings in particular. They demonstrate the potential of well designed regeneration projects to deliver gains at many levels: efficient use of land and infrastructure; greater vibrancy in local economies; better quality services and amenities; adaptation of existing buildings and structures; and a higher quality of public realm.

Many of Ireland's cities, towns and villages contain similar centrally-located lands with potential to contribute to the sustainable regeneration of their locations. The *Retail Planning Guidelines* point out that adaptation and reuse of historic buildings – by way of appropriate interventions - stimulating the overall regeneration of an historic urban area, is preferable to allowing such structures to fall into disuse while development is relocated to edge-of-centre or out-of-town locations. The sequential approach set out in the *Retail Planning Guidelines* – and in the accompanying *Retail Design Manual* - recommends that planning authorities should be pro-active in identifying potential opportunity sites which are considered appropriate for future retail development in statutory development plans, local area plans, and other non-statutory frameworks, strategies and masterplans.

[1] Opera Lane, Cork – mixed use pedestrian street connecting Patrick St. to Crawford Gallery and Opera House

[2] Temple Bar Framework Plan – architect's sketch indicating pedestrian permeability and links to hinterland



The framework focused on a number of core urban design principles, including intensification of the urban structure by increasing pedestrian permeability through the block.

## Urban Structure

### SLIGO COURTHOUSE BLOCK URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLAN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

NATIONAL BUILDING AGENCY,  
SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL,  
SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

#### CLIENT:

SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2005

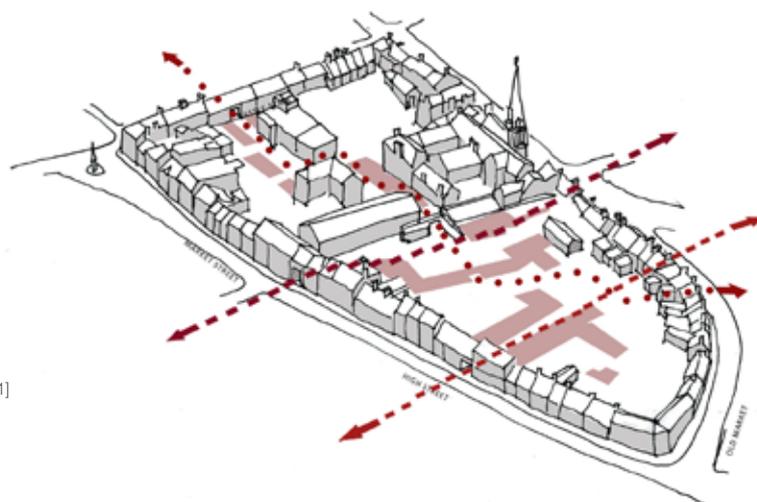
#### CONTEXT

Sligo was designated as a Gateway in the 2002 *National Spatial Strategy* and the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010* identified two architectural conservation areas relating to the courthouse block. One of these - The Courthouse Block - was the subject of an urban design framework to guide its future development. Comprising narrow frontage terraced buildings of various widths and heights - mostly two and three storey - the block's centrepiece is the fine courthouse, recently modernised to provide contemporary facilities and to conserve its fine Victorian architecture.

#### CHALLENGE

In the past decades, the courthouse block came under significant pressures from new development, the scale, density and quality of which was questionable in terms of conservation of the historic character of the area. Also much of the development that had taken place was undertaken largely on an incremental basis, without any overall planning context - including the amalgamation of plots - thereby putting pressures on the vitality of the block itself and the surrounding area. In addition, pedestrian amenity in the vicinity has been impaired by the significant traffic volumes on the streets surrounding the courthouse block.

[1] Architect's sketch showing intensification of use and improved pedestrian permeability through the Courthouse Block



[1]

Notwithstanding Sligo's designation as a Gateway in the 2002 *National Spatial Strategy*, and the existence of a number of prior plans - *Sligo Integrated Area Plan* (1998), *Sligo IAP Urban Framework Plan* (2000) and the *Sligo and Environs Development Plan* (2004) - in 2005 it was felt necessary to prepare a further framework to provide guidelines to balance the development pressures existing at that time with the overarching objective to protect the architectural heritage of the area.

[1]



**SOLUTION**

The *Courthouse Block Urban Design Framework Plan* was commissioned from the National Building Agency in 2005 to provide an urban design framework to guide the future development of the area. It focused on the elaboration of a number of core principles: conserving the architectural and historic character; retaining the block’s perimeter buildings; establishing a building height strategy; creating pedestrian permeability through the block; improving vehicular access and parking; mitigating against plot

amalgamation; protecting existing residential amenities. Under the headings of these core principles, the framework set out a range of detailed design guidelines for its implementation. The plan’s provisions have been largely incorporated into the 2010-16 Development Plan.

The plan set out to suggest a performance basis for the future development of the block, rather than to mandate particular design solutions. Nevertheless it set out some explicit requirements and presumptions to be taken into

consideration in the development management process for individual projects within the plan area.

In terms of the overall urban structure of the courthouse block, the framework recognised protection of the character of the historic streetscape as an integral part of its policies to conserve the architectural and historic character of the study area. Retention of the continuity of the block’s perimeter building frontages was an overriding objective – especially those listed as protected structures in the statutory development plan.

While the plan sought to facilitate backland development within the block, it sought to restrict plot amalgamation in the interests of maintaining the overall character of the area – particularly in terms of maintaining active street frontages along the principal routes and streets. Where permitted, amalgamation was generally restricted to the block interior – to protect the urban grain and safeguard the residential amenity of the area.

The framework set out restrictions on parking and vehicular ingress and egress into the interior of the block – to protect the character of the streetscape and to facilitate further pedestrianisation of streets within and around the study area. Where permitted, the widths of vehicular entrances were required to be minimised to reduce their visual impact, and on no condition were they to be permitted through protected structures unless by way of an existing opening or archway in the facade.

Illustrative development options in the plan sought to improve the urban grain by promoting opening-

up of the block interior with a series of strategically located passages; thereby exploiting backland sites for infill mixed-use development and making the block more permeable by generating pedestrian footfall along a network of routes and courtyards - of various shapes and sizes - traversing the block from north to south and from east to west.

**LESSONS**

The *Courthouse Block Urban Design Framework Plan* contains key development principles for the future development of the block, plus a number of schematic interpretations of the principles. Most of these have relevance to similar urban blocks throughout the country. It sought to balance the various opportunities and constraints facing most historic cities and town centres - architectural conservation, building height, pedestrian permeability, vehicular access, car parking, plot amalgamation and amenity protection.

Prepared in 2005, the plan is an integral part of the 2010-16 *Sligo and Environs Development Plan*. While little of its recommendations have been implemented on account of the economic downturn, its relevance endures as an instructive example of best practice in seeking to facilitate the development and renewal required to support Sligo's overall vitality and vibrancy, while conserving the essential character and quality of its historic urban centre, and intensifying the urban structure to new town-centre residential and mixed-use development.

[2]



- [1] The plan sought to restrict plot amalgamation in the interest of retaining the overall character of the area
- [2] The framework plan recognised that protection of the existing streetscape was an integral part of its policies to conserve the architectural and historic character of the area
- [3] Plan of Courthouse Block indicating proposed new interventions into the urban block



[3]



## Urban Structure

### TEMPLE BAR FRAMEWORK PLAN

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
GROUP 91 ARCHITECTS

**CLIENT:**  
TEMPLE BAR PROPERTIES

**DATE:**  
1991

#### CONTEXT

On the south bank of the Liffey, Temple Bar occupies a central position in Dublin's urban core. Deriving its name from Sir William Temple, the provost of Trinity College who had his house and gardens there in the seventeenth century, the area features in history mainly as the 1742 location for the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Fishamble Street, and later as the venue for the 1791 first meeting of the Society of the United Irishmen in Eustace Street. It suffered some decline during the nineteenth century, but it was still a thriving district prior to the combined impact of two unrelated but nevertheless linked mid-twentieth century developments which seemed to spell its death forever: construction of the highly unsympathetic Central Bank headquarters and the plan to locate a major transportation centre in the middle of the area.

#### CHALLENGE

Despite the decline and dereliction caused by the twin proposals for a transport interchange and new bank headquarters – coupled with resultant deterioration of the the area's seventeenth and eighteenth century heritage of townhouses and public buildings – CIE's fortuitous decision to lease premises designated for demolition to creative start-up industries unwittingly created a 'left bank' ambience; these generated a burgeoning cultural sector that eventually generated sufficient public opinion to secure Temple Bar's designation as Dublin's cultural quarter during the city's term as European City of Culture in 1991, with the expressed challenge to 'secure the regeneration of the area as a vibrant cultural quarter with a mix of uses, a high quality public realm and a strong residential population'.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The government decision to designate Temple Bar as Dublin's cultural quarter led to the setting up of a publically-owned development company – Temple Bar Properties – to deliver the regeneration programme envisaged. The project was instigated with an architectural competition to design a framework plan to steer the future development and revival of the area in accordance with the 'European' urban design principles being realised at that time in cities such as Berlin, Barcelona and Glasgow (the Scottish / Irish, but Barcelona-based, architect David Mackey was the 'distinguished non-irish' member of the competition jury).

The framework plan competition was won by Group 91, a collective of indigenous and emerging architectural practices – some of which have gone on to become recognised international figures in architecture. A key feature of the winning design was its ambition to integrate contemporary architecture with the historic urban environment of Temple Bar, in ways that would be sensitive to the predominantly eighteenth century vernacular and the historical and social character of the area. Radically at a time of internalised shopping malls, the plan proposed a series of new external routes and public spaces, and small scale interventions focused on reinforcing the character of the area, while conserving as much of the historic fabric as possible.

The regeneration was to be delivered by harnessing public and private sector finance to spearhead delivery of the the project. Taking advantage of the availability of both European structural funds and local tax relief regimes, the overall framework



[3]

Temple Bar has become a benchmark, both nationally and internationally, of urban regeneration, transforming an area earmarked for comprehensive development into a highly popular 'urban village' combining culture, retail, residential and leisure uses.

included cultural infrastructure projects such as a children's theatre, a music venue and a photographic centre, and private developments such as restaurants, shops, apartments and a – with hindsight unsustainable – quantum of 'evening economy' uses i.e. pubs.

The framework plan stressed the need to increase the residential population of the area, proposing a community of 3,000 citizens living in the city. These were provided in a number of ground-breaking projects which included mixed-use living-over-the-shop developments, adaptive reuse of historic buildings and a state-of-the-art low-energy apartment scheme. A subsequent second phase – the West End – extended Temple Bar Properties' exploration of the possibilities to promote high quality apartment living in the city.

While the the plan eschewed any overarching or 'masterplan' approach, it did make a series of interventions into the urban structure and public realm – a series of pedestrian routes and open spaces aligned along the principal axes traversing the area – north / south and east / west – and linking into existing streets and routes outside the plan area. Improved permeability was a guiding principle; backland lanes and courtyards were opened up to create new frontages and small public – or semi-public – spaces which were envisaged as stimulating street activity and an overall 'left-bank' ambience.

The *Temple Bar Framework Plan* set a benchmark for the protection and conservation of many of the area's historic buildings, incorporating their creative adaptation and reuse; whether in the conversion of otherwise redundant warehouse structures to new uses – the Granary,

mixed-use apartment and commercial scheme – the Printworks 'living over the shop' development – or its numerous and sometimes unique cultural institutions – such as the Ark Childrens' Theatre (The Irish Film Centre featured in this publication was developed by Temple Bar Properties, but undertaken outside the parameters of the framework plan).

## LESSONS

Temple Bar is firmly established as an international landmark of plan-led urban regeneration. The formation of a specially-constituted development authority, and the combination of public and private funding – including EU support and local tax reliefs – ensured that the project delivered many, if not all, of its strategic objectives. Despite criticisms, mostly arising from the overwhelming success of the area's tax-incentivised 'evening economy', the area endures as a major tourist and leisure destination – even if not the cultural quarter envisaged in 1991.

Architecturally, The *Temple Bar Framework Plan* is recognised for its successful execution of a number of verifiable and evidence-based design principles: integrating contemporary architecture into a historic urban environment; combining contemporary interventions with conservation of the inherited built fabric; creating a template for high-density mixed-use urban neighbourhoods; and demonstrating strategies to enhance the urban structure and public realm of the place. The quality of the streets and squares – and how they are used and connected – were key objectives in the regeneration of the area.

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[1] Cow's Lane – new pedestrianised street improving the permeability of the Temple Bar West End

[2] Curved Street – a new cut through pedestrian route to intensify the urban grain and improve the pedestrian permeability of the area

[3] Plan of central area showing new interventions into the historic urban fabric

[4] The Printworks, East Essex St – award-winning mixed use 'living over the shop' development conserving and adapting existing commercial premises



## Urban Structure

### WESTPORT PLAN 2000, AN INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN FOR WESTPORT

#### PROJECT TEAM

MITCHELL + ASSOCIATES

MUIR ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

JIM COADY AND ASSOCIATES  
URBAN DESIGNERS

DR. BRIAN MEEHAN  
PLANNING CONSULTANT

#### CLIENT

WESTPORT URBAN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### DATE

1997

#### CONTEXT

The Westport Plan 2000 contained a strong conservation policy setting out ground-rules to preserve the essential qualities of Westport as one of Ireland's most important planned towns; it encouraged conservation and sensitive renovation of the town's existing fabric, along with objectives to ensure that the design and scale of new development was appropriate to the character, scale, materials and architecture of the town.

Westport is one of the few planned towns in Ireland, the third largest in Co. Mayo. The town is of high visual and amenity value, with fine streets, spaces and buildings of architectural value. Westport has a varied economy – it provides services and amenities for a wide rural hinterland, it is home to a number of high-tech and pharmaceutical companies, and it has a vibrant tourist economy. During the 1990s, the town experienced unprecedented development pressures – resulting in an increase in the residential population from 4,000 to 6,000.

#### CHALLENGE

Recognising the pressures generated by the demographic and economic expansion of the town during the 'nineties, Westport Town Council commissioned the integrated action plan to address growing public concern around the impacts of this growth, and in particular to address two key challenges facing the town: regulating the town's physical expansion into its rural hinterland; and addressing the impact of planned future development on the town's historic core.

The action plan also sought to address the fact that urban design guidance which was considered too detailed for formal adoption in the Development Plan could be published as non-statutory guidance to inform the development management process.



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Proposed improvements to the town's public realm sought to create a necklace of open spaces and routes, each with its own identity and character, but linked together to provide a high quality pedestrian environment, and to provide a platform for improving Westport as a tourist destination. The proposed linkages and urban spaces were to accommodate a mixture of high quality retail, commercial, tourism and residential uses.

**SOLUTION**

The *Westport Integrated Action Plan 2000* set out key policies, objectives and detailed guidance to ensure that the growth projected for the decades ahead was coordinated in a plan-led strategy and that the future development of the town's principal central area uses – retail, commercial, tourism and residential – was accommodated in a manner that would maintain the integrity and character of Westport's heritage, protect the town's architectural quality and sense of place, and strengthen the separation between the historic core and its rural hinterland.

Policies for consolidation of the urban core in the plan sought to deliver a balance between commercial, tourism, retail and residential uses. It emphasised the importance of a

significant residential population in improving both the urban environment and the vitality of the town – particularly for family and tourism needs – and it identified opportunity sites for small infill schemes and major developments within the town limits.

The plan contained a strong conservation policy setting out ground-rules to preserve the essential qualities of Westport as one of Ireland's most important planned

[4]



towns; it proposed that the historic eighteenth century core should be designated as a conservation area and given special protection as an urban design 'set piece'. Strict terms of reference were set out for new development. The plan encouraged conservation and sensitive renovation of the town's existing fabric, along with objectives to ensure that the design and scale of new development was appropriate to the character, scale, materials and architecture of the town.

The plan sought to identify key development projects required for the town to reach its full potential, and produce a procurement strategy which would deliver these in a planned context by way of a series of detailed action plans. These covered key areas of growth envisaged for future decades including tourism, retailing, residential, industrial and commercial development. Significantly, the plan sought to accommodate this development in backland sites between the main streets, combining the development of these under-used parcels of land with proposals to improve pedestrian permeability through the town, and provide out-of-sight car parking for the core area.

While constrained by through-traffic and congestion during the prime tourist season - a by-pass was a longstanding high level planning objective - the plan nevertheless contained significant traffic calming measures to reduce the environmental impacts of traffic. It contained detailed proposals for greening and repaving the town's principal streets: footpath widths were increased, with trees on one or both sides, and new paving and street furniture were proposed. A quantum of on-street parking was

maintained and additional parking was accommodated in backlands areas as part of the development proposals for these sites.

An important element in the delivery of the plan was that it was developed with the input of all stakeholders. An extensive public consultation process was undertaken in tandem with a series of detailed briefing meetings between the plan team and the appointed steering committee. It was finally presented, and adopted, by the town council in December 1997.

## LESSONS

The *Westport 2000* plan was a visionary document and ahead of its time. It provided a plan-led strategy, and a contextual framework for the town's future development, backed up by detailed urban design guidance. It identified specific projects aimed at the expansion of the town's commercial, tourist, industrial and residential base, while conserving its heritage both in terms of its urban structure and its historic architecture. While Westport is physically constrained by its topography, the plan sought to ensure that the urban core was contained, and physically and visually separated from the town's rural hinterland. Today, Westport demonstrates the value of a plan-led approach, combined with pro-active engagement between all stakeholders – local authority, business, heritage, tourism and community groups.

[3]



[1] Traffic calming, environmental improvements and landscaping to Bridge St. retained a quantum of on-street parking

[2] New mixed use residential and commercial pedestrian route connecting Bridge St. to backland car parking area

[3] Infill 'living over the shop' mixed use development retaining the existing streetscape with new residential courtyard to the rear

[4] Town plan showing the urban structure of Westport



# PUBLIC REALM

[1]



The creation of successful urban places is not only about buildings: it is just as much about the quality of the streets, squares, parks and other open spaces that comprise the public realm of the place. These are the 'living rooms' of their communities, and their design, management and use are just as important to their success as every other aspect of their planning, design and development.

Today it is universally accepted that a well-designed, well-managed and well-used public realm is essential to the vitality and vibrancy of urban places. Cities, towns and villages with high quality streets, squares, parks, gardens, lanes and passages are more attractive as places to live, work and visit, and as destinations for residential, commercial, industrial and cultural investment, including tourism.

The 2007 *Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities* articulates the European Union's recognition of the importance a high quality public realm, not only for its positive impact on the quality of life

of urban populations, but also for its role as a 'soft locational factor' in attracting knowledge-based industries, creative workforces, and tourism to locate in particular places. These conclusions concur with key findings from the UK Urban Task Force's research in Holland, Sweden and Denmark. Its 1999 final report *Towards an Urban Renaissance* concluded that 'well-designed urban districts and neighbourhoods succeed because they recognise the primary importance of the public realm; the shape of public spaces and how they link together is essential to the cohesion of urban neighbourhoods and communities'.

Similarly, the 2006 Institute of Public Health report *Health Impacts of the Built Environment* concluded that the attractiveness and safety of a neighbourhood's public realm is a factor in determining the quality of people's physical, mental and social health. Places with poor quality and badly maintained open spaces discourage walking, cycling and outdoor activities generally; whereas

those that are attractive, safe and encourage people to go about their daily activities on foot or by bicycle – and without the use of a car – are likely to generate higher levels of physical exercise, plus greater social interaction.

This concurs with research over many years by the Danish urbanist Jan Gehl on the impact public realm quality has on levels of 'social capital' found in urban places, and on the extent to which the quality and use of open spaces are interrelated. In *Life Between Buildings: using public space* (4<sup>th</sup> English edition, 2004) he documented his findings on how people use spaces, the type of activities that take place in them, and the duration of these activities. His conclusions indicate that only essential activities occur in poor quality spaces, but that a wider range of activities take place in well-designed ones, and that people spend longer in them – thus contributing to their attractiveness and safety and with it their performance as retail, commercial, leisure and cultural destinations.

Similarly, numerous authorities on 'place-branding' make the case that public realm quality can be one of the unique selling points in the efforts of places to attract business and the talented workforces required to compete in today's global markets: perceptions of confidence to live, work and invest in an area are enhanced by the quality of public realm - plus the infrastructure and services - it offers. On the other hand, a low quality public realm - combined with poor management of the physical environment generally - is one of the main causes of the decline of urban centres, and one of

the greatest threats to their survival in the face of competition from edge-of-centre and out-of-town locations.

Therefore, sustainable 'place-making' - i.e. the making of places with their own specific character and quality - is an underlying theme within the *Government Policy on Architecture 2009-15*. In the context of architectural heritage protection, this emphasis on locational criteria and the building in its context corresponds with the understanding first articulated in the 1960s, and subsequently in all of the principal international charters and conventions, that the concept of a historic monument embraces not just the individual work, but also the setting in which it sits. The 1979 ICOMOS Burra Charter defines 'places of cultural significance' to include 'site, area, land, landscape, building...group of buildings or other works'. The Granada Convention similarly extends the definition of architectural heritage to groups of buildings - urban and rural - and sites which are, inter alia, of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest.

The case studies illustrated in this section - *The Abbeyleix Sustainable Communities plan*, *The Waterford Viking Triangle Initiative* and *The Dublin Public Realm Strategy* - are exemplars in different ways of the recognition that if cities, towns and villages are to remain attractive as locations to live, work and visit - and as destinations for inward investment - they must focus on creating, maintaining and managing a high quality public realm within the context of integrated urban development policies.

[2]



Achieving a high quality public realm requires the inclusion of public realm strategies in statutory and non-statutory plans, and a high-level recognition that the design of buildings that occupy and shape these spaces - their form, scale, proportion, material and expression - and the elements of the fabric that define their character and quality - layout, landscaping, surfaces, lighting, furniture and public art - demand as much attention as every other element of the plan. Strategies should emphasise the role of the public realm within the overall vision and objectives for the plan area - everything from large urban spaces to the smaller less formal places which make cities and towns attractive and competitive.

[1] The Killorglin Area Action Plan contained specific proposals to improve the public realm of the town centre

[2] Remodelling of Eyre Square, Galway as a high quality, European style civic space



Your City Your Space sets out to provide an agreed vision for the public realm; one that is based on a clear vision of the city's future development, and bought into by all who design, build, manage and use the city's open spaces.

## Public Realm

### DUBLIN PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

**CLIENT:**  
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:**  
2011

#### CONTEXT

The *Dublin City Development Plan 2011-17* sets out an overarching vision for the nation's capital as a sustainable, dynamic and compact city; one with a distinct character, a vibrant culture, and a diverse innovation-based economy. The Development Plan recognises the richness of Dublin's urban fabric, and particularly the importance of its public realm - streets, squares, parks and other open spaces - to the identity and sense of place which characterises the city internationally.

The Development Plan identifies six themes which provide the framework for the city's future development: economic, social, cultural, form, movement and sustainability. Under the fourth of these - form - the plan contains a specific objective to produce a public realm strategy to guide the future development of the city's public spaces.

#### CHALLENGE

Like many cities, Dublin faces many challenges in providing - and maintaining - a high quality public realm. The public realm strategy arises out of a growing awareness that the city's public spaces - particularly in the second tier - are somewhat lacking in quality, and not reaching their potential overall. The reasons identified are varied and include: under-investment in the provision and maintenance of the city's public spaces; poor recognition of the role of the public realm as an asset with its own intrinsic value; a failure to monitor the impacts of individual developments on the quality of the public realm in their vicinity.

[1]



**SOLUTION**

Dublin’s public realm strategy *Your City Your Space* sets out to provide an agreed vision for the public realm; one that is inspired by Dublin’s historic context and heritage; that is based on a clear vision of the city’s future development; and that is bought into by the diverse range of stakeholders who design, build, manage and use the city’s open spaces. While Dublin City Council has identified solutions to the challenges the city faces, it also recognises that a clear and coherent public realm strategy requires collective and considered agreement on what is needed and how it can be delivered.

The strategy builds on recent documents such as *Legible Dublin (2005)*, *Historic Street Surfaces of Dublin (2009)*, *Draft Outdoor Advertising Strategy (2011)*, *The Dublin Streets Project (2012)*, plus numerous statutory local area plans and non-statutory frameworks which

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have all sought in various ways to focus attention on aspects of the city’s public realm. However, *Your City Your Space* aspires to be a unifying initiative, providing an umbrella for the city council’s overarching public realm focus - making Dublin city a better place to live, work, invest and visit.

*Your City, Your Space* sets out an action plan for the delivery of an enhanced public realm, including standards for the design and management of its streets, squares, parks and other open spaces. As a first step, it includes an action plan and work programme for the implementation of the first phase of its proposals. These are set out under the umbrella of a number of guiding principles and a list of fifteen actions – or pilot projects – which the city council seeks to deliver across a range of activity areas, and within a two-year first phase of its implementation programme.

Derived from the overall vision set out, the principles are intended to guide specific responses to the public realm challenges the city council has identified – not only in design, but also how the city’s streets and open spaces are used, managed and maintained. Initially it is intended that the strategy will apply only to the historic, cultural and commercial core; however, it is intended that it will be updated over time to apply to the whole of the city council’s administrative area. The pilot projects are also intended to provide feedback and experience to inform future reviews of the strategy.

It is intended that the strategy will be the blueprint to guide the work of the city’s newly formed Public Realm Coordination Group, set up to integrate the work of the various city council departments responsible for delivering and managing the public realm. It is also intended to provide the framework for Dublin City Council liaison with other public agencies, private developers and the city’s citizens.

The public realm strategy recognises the value of the city’s history and heritage as unique assets, not least in marketing Dublin as a destination for forward inward investment, and attracting the talented human capital needed to drive the economy. It reinforces a number of earlier studies aimed at protecting the city’s heritage and particularly its historic street landscapes. However, it also seeks to ensure that historic Dublin does not become an ‘museum piece’. Rather, the historic urban fabric requires sensitive and well-designed modern development - projects that reflect the best of contemporary design while having respect for their historic surroundings, and in so doing,

[3]



balancing the design of individual buildings with the urban settings that comprise the public realm.

**LESSONS**

*Your City, Your Space* is an important policy statement by Dublin City Council of the important role the public realm plays in contributing to the city's attractiveness and competitiveness as a place to live, work, shop or visit.

The strategy seeks to establish agreement among the diverse stakeholders with an interest in Dublin's future: across all departments of the city council, and among the various external agencies, property owners, developers, businesses and the general public. It emphasises the importance of a collective vision to address the challenge of delivering a high quality public realm, the need for buy-in by all to deliver a coherent set of actions and pilot projects within a fixed lifespan.

[4]



- [1] The Public Realm Strategy recognises the importance of the city's architectural heritage to Dublin's future – converted 18th century townhouse, Aungier St.
- [2] Contemporary retail development integrated into the historic urban environment – Mary St.
- [3] O'Connell St. – the Public Realm Strategy recognises that the city's streets and squares, and other open spaces are central to defining the sense of place with which Dublin is identified internationally
- [4] Plan of the study area in Dublin city centre



The Viking Triangle is a multi-layered and multi-discipline initiative; comprising conservation, regeneration and tourism development initiatives to create a new identity for the city of Waterford.

## Public Realm

### WATERFORD VIKING TRIANGLE INITIATIVE

#### PROJECT TEAM

LOCUM CONSULTING /  
COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL

#### CLIENT

FAILTE IRELAND,  
WATERFORD CITY COUNCIL

#### DATE

2011

#### CONTEXT

Waterford is said to be Ireland's oldest city, with a history that can be traced back to the arrival of the Vikings in 914. Originally a 'longport', the safe harbour the estuary provided for the invaders' characteristic ships developed over time into an important trading post, and later into one of Ireland's principal ports.

The city is unique in Ireland for the extent of its surviving defensive walls and towers – a total of six medieval towers and extensive lengths of the city walls survive.

#### CHALLENGE

Typical of historic port cities everywhere, Waterford faces the challenge of securing its sustainable future as the decline of its port functions deprives the city of its principal economic base, thereby leaving its principal physical asset – the river and its quays – without their centuries-old traditional vitality and viability.

At the same time, the urban structure and the port's medieval hinterland has imposed constraints on floorplate sizes and the scale of modern development achievable in the historic core, thereby adding to the exodus of retail and commercial activity from the historic centre and a legacy of decline, vacancy and dereliction.

These and other challenges – not least the closure of the iconic Waterford Crystal manufacturing plant – were the catalyst for the city to reinvent itself as a 'Gateway City' within the context of the 2002 *National Spatial Strategy* - both as the economic driver of the south-east region and as an exemplar of balanced spatial development.

[1]



[2]



**SOLUTION**

The *Waterford City Development Plan 2007-13* sets out a vision for the future development of the city as a series of interrelated and overlapping quarters – both spatially and functionally. Similarly, proposals in the *Waterford Gateway Innovation Fund Bid* - which was set up under the umbrella of the NSS - include two landmark and linked projects for the historic centre – an iconic pedestrian bridge linking both sides of the Suir, and The Viking Triangle ‘cultural and heritage quarter’.

The Viking Triangle Initiative is a multi-layered and multi-disciplined conservation, regeneration and tourism development initiative. It seeks to exploit the coincidence that, within the Viking Triangle, there exists a collection of buildings aligned in chronological order over a span of 1,000 years. The initiative aims to re-order these cultural

assets in such a way that takes advantage of their capacity to create a new cultural identity for the city, by reinforcing existing uses, and generating new cultural, artistic and community opportunities.

The stated vision for the area is to create a distinctive cultural and heritage district for Waterford city centre: one that will create a vibrant experience that will both attract more visitors to the historic core, while also attracting locals back into the centre. As a catalyst for regeneration generally, the Viking Triangle initiative also sets out to ‘make a step-change in the overall economic performance of the city’.

Improving the quality of the Viking Triangle’s public realm is central to the initiative’s core objectives. The project specifically seeks to promote a sense of neighbourhood and place, using good design and the creative use of public spaces for

street theatre and markets, and more specifically by creating an oasis of calm by improving public access to the ruins of the medieval Franciscan friary. Other proposed improvements include reinforcing the medieval urban grain, conserving the area’s historic monuments, creating new routes and enhancing existing ones; improving existing open spaces; implementing a coordinated strategy for improved lighting, accessibility, signage, street furniture, public art and planting. The plan’s social objectives are primarily focused on promoting increased residential occupancy – especially for families, the artistic community and visitors. Commercial aims include developing the range of its commercial offering, including a farmers’ market, craft industries, restaurants and coffee shops.

The project is intended to be a vehicle to bring about initiatives to conserve and consolidate the historic urban fabric in a dramatic

and innovative manner; the objective being to utilise the area's heritage to maximum advantage in kick-starting regeneration of the medieval core overall which, in turn, is envisioned as pump-priming renewal of the city centre generally as an authentic tourism attraction - of 'international standing' – and with sufficient critical mass to become a driver for tourism in the south-east region.

In summary, the nature of The Viking Triangle project implies that it is ongoing and evolving. It is therefore not a rigid plan, but a flexible, adaptable approach that can be carried forward into the future. However, to deliver the plan's vision, a number of key steps were outlined: public interventions (making spatial improvements); private interventions (attracting distinctive businesses); and public / private initiatives (improvement, development and management). Behind these, a number of priority actions were identified to help develop the Viking Triangle into 'a first-class destination'. These were targeted for delivery in three phases: 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2011; 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2011; longer term.

## LESSONS

The Viking Triangle is an important case study in illustrating the crucial importance of creating a coherent narrative for the place – the initiative was envisaged as both the catalyst

- [1] View of the Bishop's Palace - the Viking Triangle initiative contains ambitious proposals to conserve the city's heritage of historic architecture and public spaces
- [2] Improving the public realm is central to Waterford's efforts to reinvent itself as a 'Gateway City' and the economic driver of the south-east region.
- [3] Waterford is unique in Ireland for the extent of its surviving medieval walls and towers; the Viking Triangle Initiative seeks to utilise this heritage to create an identity for the Viking Triangle as the city's 'cultural quarter'
- [4] Plan showing the Viking Triangle area of Waterford

[3]



and a core element of the city's regeneration plans – to re-brand Waterford as a vibrant and high quality city centre destination, one that would be attractive to residents, visitors and businesses alike.

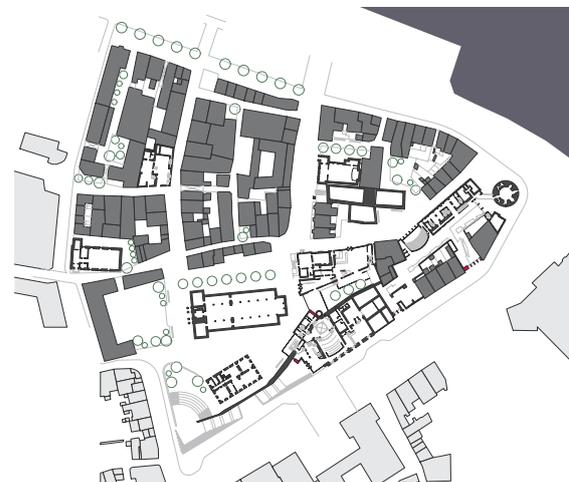
The project also shows that the physical conservation of a building is not sufficient and is only the start of the process. Buildings will only survive into the future if they can adapt, and the approach here is to make the exterior conservation paramount, but with some interior flexibility that ensures economic viability of units that are no longer useful in the twenty-first century.

The city is a living organism that requires active decision-making, direction and catalyst by the local authority together with buy-in by the private sector. Different delivery mechanisms require to be used, not all projects can rely on immediate

capital investment and so slower, less costly solutions such as skill development and back-to-work schemes to improve stock can be very appropriate. Constant vigilance is required to maintain rigour of design standards.

It is recognised that in a city the size of Waterford, the concentration of assets in the city centre is vital. In this regard the relocation of Waterford Crystal alongside the Viking Triangle as an attractor cannot be underestimated.

[4]





Best known for many years as a traffic bottleneck on the Dublin-Cork road, the town of Abbeyleix has been transformed in recent years by a series of enlightened 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' initiatives to improve the public realm of the town and its overall vitality and viability.

## Public Realm

### ABBEYLEIX SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

LOCI URBAN DESIGN,  
PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

AIT URBANISM AND LANDSCAPE

DE BLACAM & MEAGHER ARCHITECTS

#### CLIENT:

LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

ABBEYLEIX BUSINESS AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FORUM

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS,  
HERITAGE AND THE GAELTACHT

#### DATE:

2009

#### CONTEXT

Originating with the twelfth-century building of a Cistercian abbey, the Abbeyleix of today was laid out in the nineteenth century by the Vesey family who were responsible for its planned layout and its cruciform plan emanating from the market square – a crescent of townhouses surrounding the Italianate market house, which was recently adapted into a public library.

Designated a 'Heritage Town', a 2010 study resulted in much of the urban core being classified as an architectural conservation area. In the 2012-18 *Laois County Development Plan*, Abbeyleix is classed as a 'Service Town' - i.e. towns providing retail, residential, service and amenity facilities for both their local communities and their rural hinterlands.

[1]



[1] The public realm improvements to Market Square were undertaken by the Local Authority with support of the town community – car parking was rationalised, vehicle access was controlled, the monument was conserved and the area was landscaped as a high quality urban space

[1]



**CHALLENGE**

Like many towns in Ireland, Abbeylax is facing significant challenges to its vitality and viability. It has witnessed significant depopulation of the urban core as new development has migrated to edge-of-centre and out-of-town locations, and the leakage of retail spend to larger centres is threatening the future of the town centre’s remaining shops – a threat compounded by its proximity to the M8 Dublin – Cork motorway.

Abbeyleix is also challenged by traffic congestion. Notwithstanding an overall reduction in vehicle numbers since the bypassing of the town in the 1990s - and the more recent construction of the M8 motorway - significant volumes of heavy goods vehicles avoid tolls by travelling through the centre; and the limited car parking provision is mostly on-

street along Main Street – two factors which detract significantly from the attractiveness of Abbeylax as a place to live, work, shop or visit.

**SOLUTION**

Despite the challenges which Abbeylax has faced in the last decades, the town has retained a core residential population and a strong network of business and community organisations: the Tidy Towns committee is particularly industrious in making improvements to the public realm, and the business community is active in lobbying on behalf of the town’s retail and commercial interests.

Laois County Council’s commissioning of the adaptation of the market house into a new

town library – and the associated environmental improvements to its surroundings – have been a major catalyst in creating a renewed civic pride and sense of place for Abbeylax’s town centre; the library won conservation awards from the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland and the Civic Trust for its designers de Blacam & Meagher Architects.

Subsequently, the Abbeylax Business and Community Development Forum – with support from Laois County Council and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – set about the preparation of a strategic plan for the town. Seeking to marry ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ initiatives, the *Abbeyleix Sustainable Communities Plan* sought to establish a vision for its future, along with a range of policies and strategies to make the town a more attractive place.

Relying on the vibrant community structures which endure despite the many challenges facing Abbeylax, the plan aspires to position the town as an exemplar of those qualities which are today understood to underpin sustainable communities: places where people want to live and work, now and in the future; that meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life; that are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

While the policies, strategies and guidance in the plan set out to deliver several, if not all, aspects of what constitutes sustainable communities, the final report focuses on those key aspects of the physical environment that most contribute to making places successful - a strong sense of place,

a high quality public realm, respect for the built heritage, and the availability of good access and connections.

Highlighting the scope for improving the maintenance and presentation of both the buildings and open spaces which constitute the public realm, the plan emphasises the extent to which Abbeyleix's architectural heritage contributes to the town's identity and sense of place, and the importance of protecting and enhancing this uniqueness as part of its drive to realise its economic and tourism potential.

The plan sets out guidance for the delivery of its key recommendations, and it outlines a number of 'priority' projects and actions, including: restoring the 'crescent' of buildings around the market square; creating a 'bookend' building at the north end of Main Street; forming a southern 'gateway' on the Cork road; and improving the quality of its open spaces.



## LESSONS

The *Sustainable Communities Plan* highlights the importance of a sense of place, respect for the environment and a high quality public realm in the creation of sustainable communities. It also recognises the value of heritage – both in terms of historic buildings and public spaces – as a resource to be conserved, both for its own sake and to revitalise the town centre and its economy.

The plan highlights the importance of coordinated 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' actions in the delivery of successful outcomes: a proactive local authority and meaningful community engagement were essential elements in the production of the plan, as they are in the creation of sustainable communities and sustainable development.

Finally, the plan demonstrates the value of strategic infrastructure investment; in this case public realm improvements and adaptation of the former market house were catalysts in 'pump-priming' wider community initiatives for the regeneration of the vitality and viability of the town, its community and its local economy.

[1] Despite challenges it faces from retail, commercial and residential 'leakage', Abbeyleix town centre has retained a core residential population and a strong community spirit

[2] The adaptation of the market house into a new town library and the associated environmental improvements have been a major catalyst in creating a renewed civic pride and sense of place for the town.

[3] Plan of Abbeyleix town centre

[4] The plan was developed jointly by the Abbeyleix Business and Community Development Association and Laois County Council, with support from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

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[4]

# ADAPTIVE REUSE

The case studies in this publication respond to the statement in the *Architectural Heritage Protection - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* that conservation of buildings and places does not infer that they are frozen in time, but that 'the creative challenge is to find appropriate ways to satisfy the requirements of a structure to be safe, durable and useful on the one hand, and to retain its character and special interest on the other'.

The *Government Policy on Architecture* also reiterates the State's commitment to the 'highest standards in the protection, conservation, and maintenance of the historic built environment'. Echoing the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines'* recognition of the benefits of sympathetic conservation, adaptation and reuse of historic buildings, the architecture policy stresses their value as a resource to be exploited in the production of a sustainable built environment, and that 'subject to retaining its cultural value, the continuing use of the existing building stock should be an important objective in both public and privately led development'.

Changing the use of historic buildings has not always been favoured in the history of architectural conservation. William Morris's manifesto of the Society of Ancient Buildings contains a plea 'to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands; if it has become inconvenient for its present use, raise another building rather than alter or enlarge the old one'. Nevertheless, the principle of change is now firmly established in policy: the 1985 Council of Europe *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (The Granada Convention) specifically

commits member states to foster 'the adaptation where appropriate of old buildings for new uses' – subject to 'due regard being had to the architectural and historical character of the heritage'.

Today's theories regarding protection of the architectural heritage could be said to originate from Renaissance reactions against the widespread demolition of buildings from antiquity, as exemplified by Leon Battista Alberti's 'indignation when I see buildings demolished and going to ruin by the carelessness, not to say abominable avarice, of the owners'.

However, current thinking can be traced back to positions that developed in Europe from the mid-nineteenth century, and particularly the influence of two parallel, but opposing, lines of thought. On the one hand, the French architect Viollet-le-Duc promoted 'faithful restoration' – i.e. an idealised reconstruction to a conjectural original condition, based on historical research and analogy, and even using contemporary materials and techniques. On the other, the theory of conservation articulated by William Morris and his mentor John Ruskin advocated that historic buildings should be conserved in such a manner as to reflect their age. Citing the impossibility of reproducing the authenticity of the original in a different historical context, Ruskin stated that 'it is impossible, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture'.

However, Ruskin modified his views in the 1870s accepting that intervention, beyond simple maintenance, may be required where significant deterioration or structural failure has occurred.

In the period after the Second World War, these philosophies were further discussed as conservation theory sought to respond to the challenge of repairing the massive damage to Europe's historic building stock. A range of contrasting theories emerged – not all of which could be said to accord with the views of either Le-Duc or Ruskin. Sometimes different methodologies were employed within the same countries, and even within the same cities.

In Italy a school of thought developed around the theory of 'Restauro Critico' – essentially a compromise between the conservation and restoration approaches – based on a critical interpretation of the original work, creating a clear distinction between the new and the old, allowing for the reversibility of contemporary interventions, and re-establishing, what one of its advocates, Cesare Brandi, called the 'potential oneness of the work without creating a historical fake or an aesthetic outrage'. Many of the projects illustrated here are of the *restauro critico* type, but it is recognised that not all conservation projects are suitable for this approach.

The 1964 ICOMOS Venice Charter drew on the *restauro critico* principles and earlier documents. Distinguishing between conservation and restoration, the text nevertheless emphasises their unity of purpose: 'to safeguard (monuments) for future generations...in the full richness of their authenticity...no less as works of art than as historical evidence'. While not defining the precise differences between the two processes (this was followed up and addressed in the ICOMOS Burra Charter of 1979), the charter does stress the importance of respect

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for 'original material and authentic documents' and expression of a clear distinction between the new and the old; restoration must stop, the charter says, 'at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp'. However, it must be recognised that not all conservation projects require interventions of this nature, indeed some ruinous monuments are best left as ruins, while in many cases conservation works will not be contrastive and will in time weather to match the old work.

A decade later, a joint Union of International Architects and International Council for Monuments and Sites seminar adopted a number of key resolutions in relation to *The Integration of Modern Architecture in Old Surroundings*. It states that 'all human settlements, if they are to remain living entities, must adapt to changing circumstances' and that 'the introduction of new elements into old surroundings is both feasible and, to the extent that it affords the opportunity of enriching the functional and aesthetic character of the existing fabric, desirable'. However, this is on condition that modern architecture and present-day technology must 'respect the structural, aesthetic, historical, and social qualities of the surroundings and be sensitive to the local vernacular'.

This imperative to integrate contemporary architecture with heritage protection is articulated in the Granada Convention's recognition of the importance 'of promoting architectural creation as our age's contribution to European heritage' and the need to develop ways in which architectural heritage



[1] Kodak House, Rathmines – former photographic laboratory adapted to new use as headquarters for marketing and advertising agency



protection 'can best be reconciled with the needs of contemporary economic, social and cultural activities'. Equally, the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines* recognise that the conservation of buildings and places 'does not mean that a structure is forever frozen in time. Good conservation practice allows a structure to evolve and adapt to meet changing needs while retaining its particular significance'.

While neither conservation nor restoration in the strict meanings of those terms, the case study projects

in this volume illustrate a range of approaches to expressing new interventions in a contemporary idiom, while protecting the character and special interest of the original work; they aspire to combine the new and the old, the modern and the historic, the present and the past in ways that create an architecture which is richer and more dynamic than either on its own. Yet they retain the essential values of the original intact for today and for future generations. However, it must be recognised that this is not the only valid approach to conserving architectural heritage.

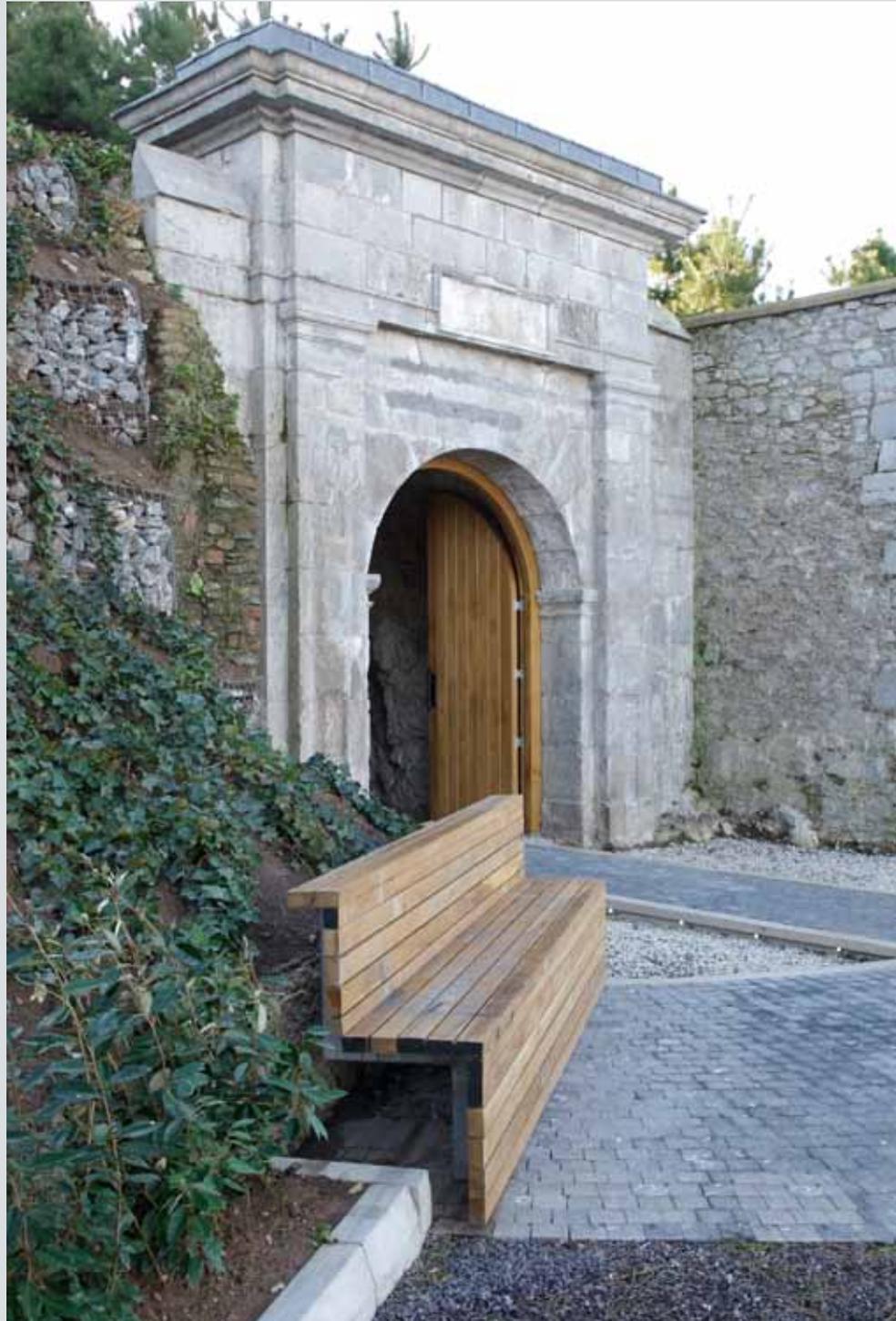
Not all of the projects involve works to protected structures. Those illustrated demonstrate a range of responses to this challenge: they combine the new and the old, the modern and the historic, the present and the past in ways that create an architecture which is richer and more dynamic than either on its own, yet they retain the essential values of the original intact for future generations.

They are, equally, valuable exemplars of responses to the *Government Policy on Architecture's* emphasis on creating a sustainable built

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environment. In today's battle against climate change, the conservation, adaptation and reuse of historic buildings resonates with imperatives to utilise the world's resources in ways that are environmentally responsible. In this regard, the inherited built environment is a physical resource which is depleted whenever an otherwise sound structure is demolished; whereas its sympathetic adaptation and reuse not only extends its lifespan and retains its heritage values, it conserves much of the embodied energy used in its original construction.

Conservation of historic buildings therefore has an ethical dimension, conforming as it does to the Brundtland Report's definition of sustainable development: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. These resonances between heritage protection and environmental sustainability were anticipated by Ruskin as early as 1849. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, he states: 'it is not a question of whether we should preserve the buildings of times past or not. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us'.



[1] The Main Guard, Clonmel – closing the vista from the main street

[2] Entrance portico, The Island Crematorium, Cork



## Adaptive Reuse

### IRISH FILM INSTITUTE, TEMPLE BAR

#### PROJECT TEAM:

O'DONNELL + TUOMEY ARCHITECTS

BOYD AND CREED  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

FEARON O'NEILL ROONEY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

#### CLIENT:

THE IRISH FILM CENTRE

#### DATE:

1992

#### CONTEXT

The Irish Film Institute (Phase 1: 1992. Phase 2: 2011) is a reworking and opening up of a set of historic buildings with the addition of two new buildings, arranged around a new public route and glass roofed central space.

The project is a conversion of the former Quaker Meeting House and headquarters in Eustace Street, Temple Bar.

The Quakers had accumulated a cluster of overlapping properties, which they built up around the seventeenth-century foundations of their mid-block Meeting House. It occupies the centre of a city block and has no significant street frontage, but has narrow routes of access from Eustace Street, Dame Street and Sycamore Street.

The building accommodates all aspects of film culture. It includes three cinemas, the national film archive, a bookshop, restaurant, bar, classrooms and offices for various organisations.

The nine existing Quaker buildings on the site were surveyed and a full set of measured drawings made. Conservation, condition and use reports were prepared. Through

analysis based on this work, and in consultation with the planning authority, a proposal was made for selective demolitions and the careful insertion of new buildings to house the contemporary twentieth century art of cinema within this collection of eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century buildings. The end result is an integrated set of spaces where old and new are treated with equal respect. A new route cuts through the site connecting Eustace Street and Sycamore Street, passing through two new public spaces: the internal, glass roofed foyer and an outdoor space for socialising and smoking overlooked by the archive, library and projection box.

[1]



**SOLUTION**

Some parts of the historic building were left almost untouched, with the addition of basic services and paint. Their old walls and floorboards give character to the offices. Other areas of the building were repaired or restored with care, in particular where it would be difficult to do work in the future without disruption, or where the extent of disrepair posed a risk.

Parts of the existing building were ideally suited to the proposed use, both in their general character and spatial quality. The two original cinemas are housed within the walls of existing rooms, as are the bar and some offices. New elements have been installed within these rooms to accommodate the new functions.

The principal areas of new building are the foyer, the projection room and the archive.

A new steel sign-box with neon illumination projects over the original door on Eustace Street, indicating the entrance to the Film Institute. A long, tunnel-like corridor leads from this entrance to the foyer. Its length is illuminated by a ladder-like glass

floor light in mild steel with neon strips below the 25mm glass. Its walls make a gallery for film posters and reviews.

The foyer occupies the central space, with a new high level glass roof. Three sides of the courtyard are formed by existing buildings. The fourth is a new three-storey building housing offices, restaurant, and information / box office.

The materials in the walls, roof and floor of the foyer were chosen to give the sense of an external public place. The floor is limestone, in concentric circles separated by mild steel bands. The new sand and cement plaster walls are coloured with natural ochre pigment.

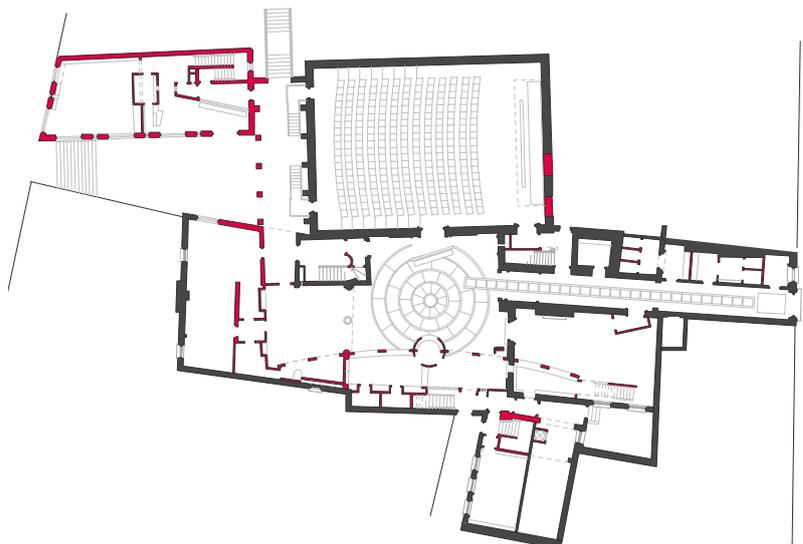
The larger cinema is housed in the former meeting room, the most significant part of the original building. This dated from the early 19th century and showed evidence of having been changed frequently throughout that century, with the walls raised, windows blocked up and new ones added. Our intervention adds another layer to the life of this building.

The screen and speakers are housed in a large cabinet, thus building nothing permanent into the architecture of the room. The

**CHALLENGE**

The brief was, to some extent, determined by what was possible within the existing Quaker buildings. It was clear that, within the budget available, it would not be possible to restore and repair the buildings fully and provide all the accommodation required by the client. It was agreed to give priority to public and technical spaces for film and to the foyer and entrance sequence.

[2]



Many parts of the historic fabric were left almost untouched, others were carefully repaired and restored, and where needed, new elements were installed to accommodate their new cinema-related functions

[3]



windows behind remain in place, blocked up on the outside to exclude sound and light. The screen cabinet could be removed and the windows reopened in the future.

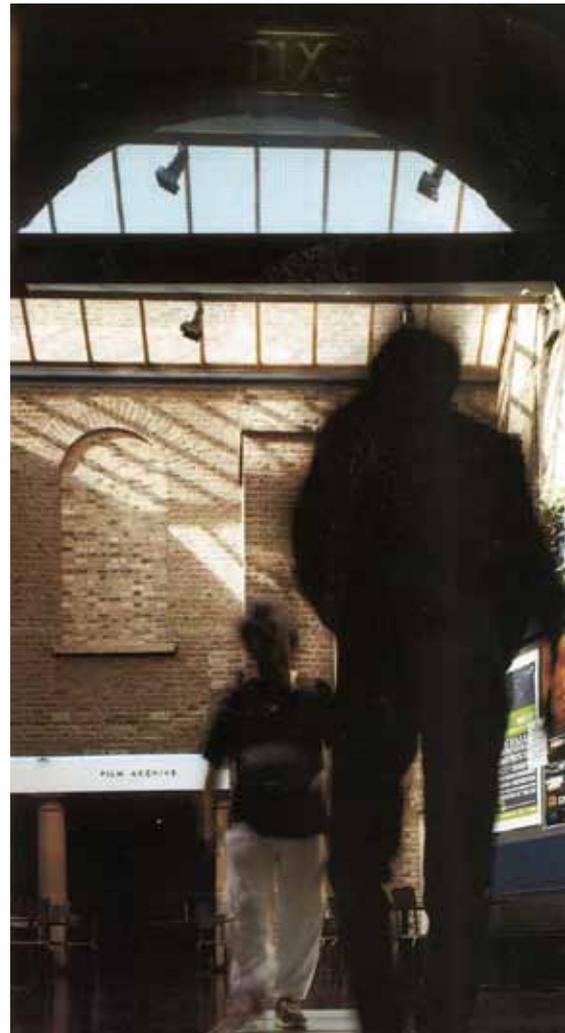
A new building on Sycamore Street houses the archival functions. It is made in smooth red brick with steel windows and concrete elements. This small infill building is the only part of the Film Centre which has a presence on the public street. It has a narrow front to Sycamore Street, and its long side extends into the site, forming one side of a new raised courtyard. A drop in level across the site allows the film storage to be at street level, one floor below the public access, which is level with the other public facilities.

The limestone clad projection box is at high level between the external walls of the two cinemas and the archive block. The slender columns which support it make an informal portico, with a blue neon line on the stone soffit, connecting the entrance

to a wide flight of steps down to the new public space of Meeting House Square and providing shelter for smokers and others sitting at the outside tables.

The second phase work was completed on a set of new interventions which provide a small studio cinema, much bigger toilets, an upgrade to the bar and a new book and film shop. These additions were made in the same spirit as the original project and can be clearly read. They are designed to co-exist with the old buildings; to add to and enhance but not to challenge them.

[4]



- [1] The foyer occupies what was an external yard, it is enclosed with a new glass roof to give the sense of external public space
- [2] Plan of the Film Centre showing the extent of original Quaker Meeting House fabric retained and highlighting the new interventions required to adapt the building to its new cinema use
- [3] The main cinema is housed within the early nineteenth century former meeting room, the most important space of the Quaker Meeting House; all new interventions are designed to be reversible
- [4] A new route cuts through the site connecting Eustace Street and Sycamore Street, passing through two new public spaces



## Adaptive Reuse

### MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT, CASTLE STREET, DUBLIN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

DE BLACAM & MEAGHER  
ARCHITECTS

JOHN D. SKELLY + ASSOCIATES  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

FEARON O'NEILL ROONEY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

R.N. MURPHY + ASSOCIATES  
MECHANICAL AND  
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

#### CLIENT:

GORDON CAMPBELL

#### DATE:

1999

#### CONTEXT

Situated opposite Christchurch Cathedral and close to Dublin Castle, in the heart of the city, this prominent site on the corner of Castle Street and Werburgh Street was occupied by a three storey, concrete-framed building built in the 1960s. The building was out of context with its surroundings in its scale, form and materials. It was set back from Castle Street and recessed on the corner as a result of a, subsequently cancelled, road-widening proposal. The adjoining building on Castle Street is a four storey brick Late Georgian townhouse restored in 1997 by the Dublin Civic Trust, while St Werburgh Church borders the site to the south. The existing building, while structurally sound, was derelict.

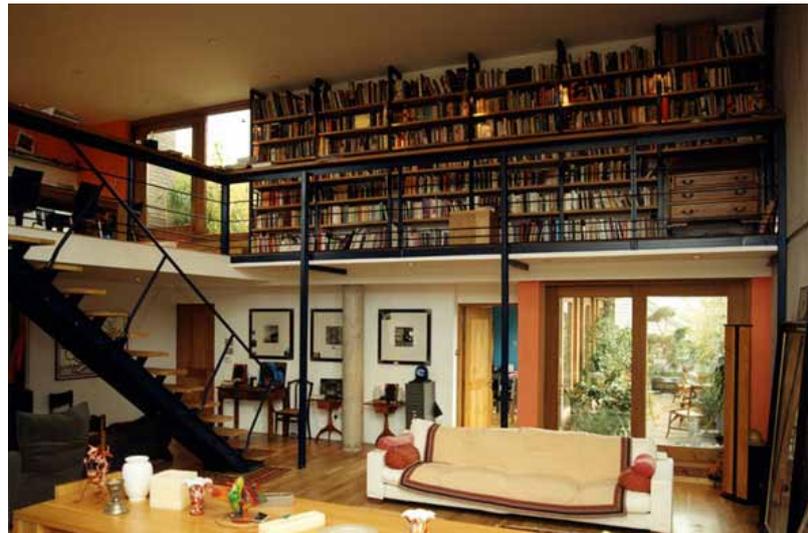
#### CHALLENGE

The challenge of this project was to take the existing building and integrate it into the varying surrounding contexts of Castle Street, Werburgh Street and Christchurch Cathedral.

[1]



[2]



**SOLUTION**

A decision was taken early in the design process to retain the existing building in the new development. Although of little architectural merit, retaining the existing building avoided the need to rebuild on either of the boundaries of the adjoining sites. It was stripped back to its concrete frame and extended to the south, east and on top, to provide a retail unit at ground level, offices at first and second floor levels, and a penthouse apartment at third and fourth floor levels.

The new works included an extension to the existing building to bring it out to the line and parapet level of the existing terrace of brick buildings on Castle Street and to complete the corner of Castle Street and Werburgh Street. A third and fourth floor were also added. The rendered façade of the existing building is retained on Werburgh Street, while the new works are made primarily in brick.

The materials used are generally sympathetic to the surrounding environment. Black flamed granite cladding is used at ground floor and a dark brick, consisting mainly of overburns was used to diffuse the volume of the building and carry the Castle Street elevation around the corner to Werburgh Street. The original render building was repainted with a similar colour to the adjacent St Werburgh Church.

Untreated iroko windows were used to soften the elevation with a six metre high corner window at third floor emphasising the prominent corner, providing aspect for the double height living space behind, and echoing the oriel window of the former Tudor house.

The penthouse was designed to have external terraces to all corners of the building, which exploit the many views available from this location including the Dublin mountains to the south, Christchurch Cathedral to the west and Dublin Castle to the east.

[3]



The temptation might have been to demolish the existing unsightly building; the decision was made to retain and reuse it as an exemplary illustration of the potential of adaptive reuse generally.

[4]

The planning process was quite straightforward. The decision to include a mixture of different uses within the building (retail, office and residential) was in line with the zoning objectives of the Development Plan and has proven to be successful in this location. There was also a clear benefit to the city in completing the construction of this urban corner, particularly given its proximity to Christchurch Cathedral and Dublin Castle.

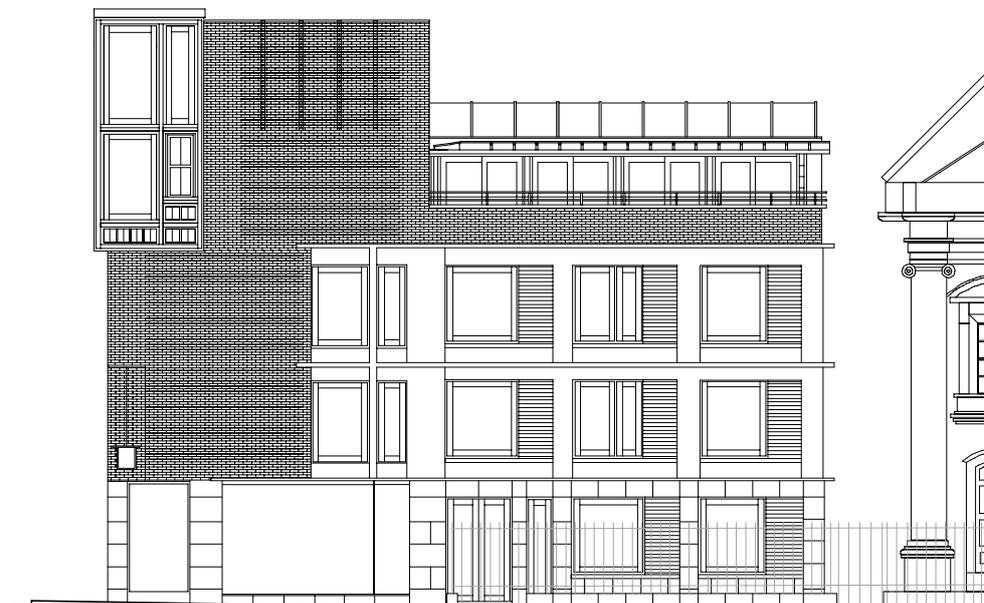
## LESSONS

The existing building on the site was unsightly and out of context with the surrounding buildings. The temptation might have been to remove it and develop the site from scratch. The decision to retain and reuse it, and to allow the new building works to almost completely transform the existing (the frontage to Werburgh Street is now the only visible element of the existing building) is an example of one way to redevelop an unsightly existing building, without going to the extreme of demolishing it.

- [1] The mix of uses proposed in the adaptation and reuse – retail, offices and residential – coincided with the Dublin City Development Plan zoning objectives for the site
- [2] The double-height penthouse apartment has external terraces on all sides with views over the city and beyond
- [3] The existing building was out of context with its surroundings, in terms of its form, scale, and materials
- [4] The challenge of the project was to take an unsightly 1960s structure and adapt it to integrate with its historic neighbours – Castle Street, St. Werburgh's Church and Christchurch Cathedral
- [5] The existing concrete frame structure was retained – the new elements added to remake the corner and increase the building's height were made of brick with iroko joinery – including the six metre high projecting corner window



[5]





## Adaptive Reuse

### KODAK HOUSE, RATHMINES

**PROJECT TEAM:**

PAUL KEOGH ARCHITECTS

LAWTON ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

BASIL CONROY + CO.  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

JOHN MCCARTHY FIRE SAFETY  
CONSULTANTS

**CLIENT:**

QUIRKE LYNCH HOLDINGS /  
CAWLEY NEA ADVERTISING  
& MARKETING

**DATE:**

1999-2002

**CONTEXT**

Along with the Bovril building in Ringsend and Archer's Garage in Fenian Street, Kodak House is one of the few examples of Art Deco architecture in Dublin. It was constructed in 1930 as the headquarters for Kodak's operation in Ireland, housing warehousing and processing laboratories.

The design is by Donnelly, Moore & Keatinge and construction was carried out by the Dublin firm McLaughlin & Harvey. It is thought to be one of a pair – with the other in Florida, USA.

**CHALLENGE**

When Kodak downsized its operations, the building was purchased by its current owners and continued to operate as an independent photo-processing laboratory up to the end of the 1980s. However, with the impending termination of chemical photo processing, it became incumbent on the owners Quirke Lynch Holdings to investigate alternative uses to sustain the future of the building – both physically and commercially.

It was around this time that the former Archer's Garage was unlawfully demolished, only to be subsequently reinstated by order of An Bord Pleanala. Kodak House was not listed until it was added to List 2 of the *Dublin City Development Plan* after the renovation project had been completed.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The initial brief to the architects was restricted to the remodelling of the upper floor – the ground floor continued in use as photographic laboratories until 2002 when it too was remodelled.

Preliminary studies for the first floor explored essentially residential uses – converting the open plan modular floorplate to a number of loft-style studio apartments with mezzanine sleeping galleries.

During the preliminary design phases, a chance enquiry resulted in a pre-letting agreement between the owner and future tenant, to remodel the open plan laboratory as headquarters for one of Ireland's up and coming advertising agencies. This fortuitous coincidence contributed in no small measure to securing a sustainable future use – and conservation of the essential character of the building,

both internally and externally. The future tenants sought to conserve the industrial quality and character of the original, particularly its steel structure and casement windows.

The most significant intervention is in the insertion of a new mezzanine running the full length of the first floor. The old rooflights were replaced and the central area was re-roofed with a new clear span curved steel structure, thus providing an extra office floor, with space beneath for service rooms. The mezzanine floor also creates a relationship between the office interior and the external roof terrace.

The mezzanine organises the plan into three distinct zones: the main open-plan office area to the north; secondary open-plan office areas and conference rooms to the south; a central zone comprising library, photocopying and meeting rooms

beneath the mezzanine. Entry and services are at opposing ends of the building.

The flat roof is insulated externally so the steelwork can be exposed internally. The concrete structure was drylined internally and the steel windows renovated, re-glazed and renewed. The wooden floors – wide board oak on battens – can be lifted to gain access to computer and communications services below; background lighting is entirely by halogen uplighters with tungsten task lighting at each work place.

The design of the project concentrates on the exploitation of light into a deep floor plan and differentiating between the various types of space within. The use of a limited palette of colour and materials for the interventions focuses on the existing structure and creates new spatial effects with the minimum of means.

[2]

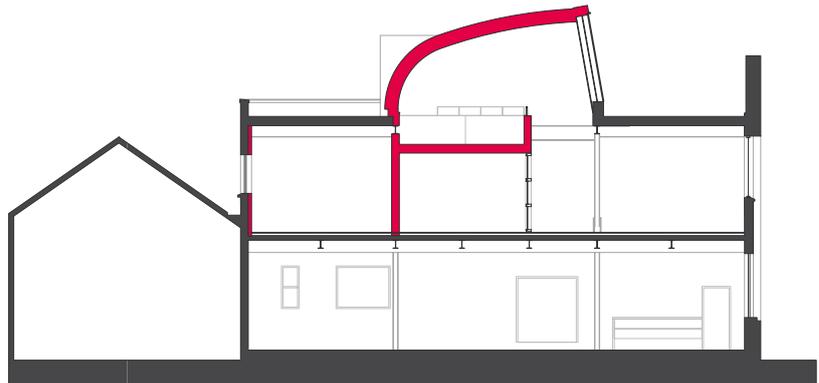


The most significant intervention was the insertion of a new mezzanine floor running the full length of the space; the old rooflights were replaced.

## LESSONS

Apart from being an exemplar of an industrial building adapted for contemporary uses, the principal lesson of the project is in demonstrating an alternative to the ubiquitous and ordinary working environment thought to be the preferred choice of today's high technology and service firms. Previous advice from letting agents employed by the owner sought the insertion of suspended ceilings, fluorescent lighting, replacement windows and fitted carpets. On the contrary, the development of a spatial model and architectural language in sympathy with the robust loft-style of the 1930s original has provided a suitable and appreciated working environment.

[3]



[4]



- [1] Used as Kodak's main laboratories for over a half-century, the building became redundant with the impending termination of chemical photo processing in the 1990s
- [2] Kodak House is one of the few remaining Art-Deco buildings in Dublin; constructed in the 1930s, it was not listed as a protected structure until after the renovations were completed in 2002
- [3] Cross section showing the new mezzanine structure and north light glazing to the deep plan office interior
- [4] The design sought to complement the robust industrial language of the original, and offer an alternative to the ubiquitous carpet, fluorescent lighting and suspended ceiling environment of most office interiors



## Adaptive Reuse

### WAREHOUSE CONVERSION, BARROW STREET, DUBLIN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

DE BLACAM & MEAGHER  
ARCHITECTS

BRUCE SHAW PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT LTD.

HENDRICK RYAN + ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

MACARDLE MCSWEENEY  
ASSOCIATES CONSULTING  
ENGINEERS

BRUCE SHAW PARTNERSHIP  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

#### CLIENT:

TREASURY HOLDINGS

#### DATE:

2000

#### CONTEXT

The building, which is three storeys high, faces west onto the Grand Canal Basin in the Dublin Docklands. It is accessed from Barrow Street via a yard to the north of the building and is enclosed to the south and east by a mixture of residential and commercial use buildings. The existing building was derelict but the main structure was substantially intact. The cast iron frame supporting three-quarter inch solid timber floors was of note, as were the stone rubble walls with brick reveals and the steel framed windows, in varying states of repair. There were a number of unsightly modern additions to the outside of the building – stairs, lifts, toilets, etc.

#### CHALLENGE

The main challenge of the project was to incorporate into the building all of the requirements of a modern office, without detracting from the character of the existing warehouse space.

The emphasis was on retaining as much of the original fabric as possible; new interventions were kept to the minimum and designed to both complement and contrast with the original.

[1]



## SOLUTION

An emphasis was put on maintaining as much of the original building fabric as possible. The modern additions were removed, returning the building to its original rectangular form. The solid masonry walls were left exposed both inside and outside. These were sand-blasted to remove paint and plaster and a breathable sealer was applied to both sides. Damp-proofing work to them was required at ground level, primarily at the gable facing onto the canal, and a chemical damp proof course was injected at ground level. Some window openings had been blocked up and these were re-opened, with brick arches re-built as required using reclaimed bricks. The roof was stripped back to its structure, and the steelwork brushed to remove rust, primed and painted. Existing timber purlins and rafters were treated for rot by a specialist, with new timbers spliced in as required. The roof was finished in natural slate. The existing steel framed windows were repaired where possible, or replaced with W20 steel windows to match. All window reveals were plastered internally with a water resistant render.

New interventions were kept to a minimum and intended to complement and contrast with the existing. A new core including kitchens, toilets and ancillary services was inserted at the east end of the building. It is planned as a square element rising through each floor of the building, positioned independently of the existing structure. It is plastered and painted white, clearly identifying it as new and distinct from the existing exposed masonry walls. The main stair serving the building rises between this new core and the existing east wall. The remainder of the plan is left as open office

space, with lightweight glass and plasterboard partitions used to form individual rooms where required.

In order to bring the fire safety standards of the building in line with the current building regulations, the underside of the existing timber floors was clad with an independent plasterboard enclosure to provide the required separation between floors. This allowed the existing timber floor to be retained and for wiring to desks to be run below the floor.

A 25m long rooflight was added along the apex of the roof, to naturally light the top floor office space from above.

Externally black painted steel balconies were added to the west facade, cantilevered out over the canal. An open steel staircase outside the building provides alternative means of escape from the office floors.

The building is located in an area zoned 'to provide for the creation and protection of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment creation'. Its use for office accommodation was in line with this objective. The approach of retaining and reusing as much of the existing building fabric as possible was favoured by the Planning Authority.



[2]

**LESSONS**

The aim of the project was to conserve this simple warehouse by demolishing all modern additions and restoring its key features, stone walls, timber floors, steel windows and steel structure. The project put emphasis on retaining and re-using as much of the original fabric of the building as possible, and treating necessary new interventions as distinct and clearly separate from the existing structure.

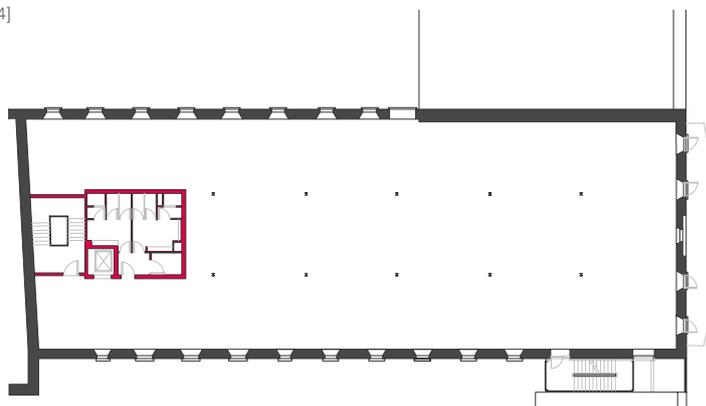
The appropriate choice of use for the building is also important. Using it as office accomodation allowed it to be largely retained as clear open space, which maintained a lot of the character of the existing warehouse. An alternative use, such as residential, which requires more sub-division of the space, would work less well in this regard.

[3]

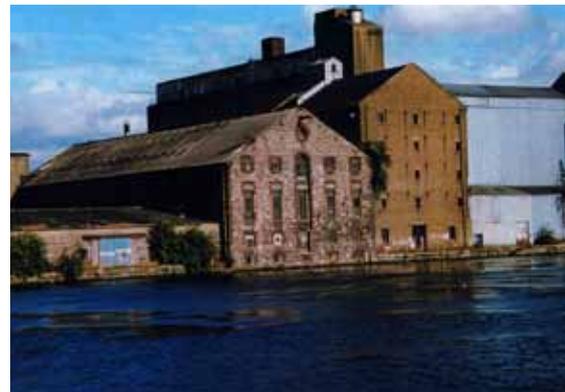


- [1] The stone walls, timber floors and steel windows of the original structure were retained and conserved in the adaptive reuse of the warehouse
- [2] The existing windows were retained and repaired wherever possible. Where not, they were replaced with W20 steel casement windows to match the originals
- [3] The main elements of the building's original fabric – floors, walls, windows and roof structure – were conserved and restored, and necessary new interventions were treated as separate and distinct from the original
- [4] Floor plan showing the insertion of a new service core accommodating kitchens, toilets and ancillary services
- [5] The warehouse was conserved and adapted to its new use by removing all accretions to the original structure

[4]



[5]





## Adaptive Reuse

### COPPINGER COURT, CORK

#### PROJECT TEAM:

MAGEE CREEDON KEARNS  
ARCHITECTS

NESTOR KELLY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

C.A. SMITH + ASSOCIATES  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

PAUL HOUSTON + ASSOCIATES LTD.

#### CLIENT:

PRIVATE

#### DATE:

2003

#### CONTEXT

Pope's Quay is composed of an assortment of eighteenth and nineteenth century terraced buildings facing south across the River Lee to the 'island' centre of Cork city. The site had five existing residential/retail buildings on the quay side, including one late eighteenth century residence requiring conservation, with outbuildings, some smaller houses and gardens stepping up the hill behind in several terraces. Two pedestrian lanes climbed through the site, Hill Lane and Coppinger Lane, the latter linking through to Shandon Street.

The Shandon area is an appealing enclave of mostly small scale housing clustered around the hill, and under the 'shadow' of the distinctive steeple. The main streets have a mix of uses reminiscent of a country town, and the impressive monuments of the former Butter Market and the Firkin Crane Dance Centre stand testament to the importance of the butter trade in the past. The area is characterised by the sense of community evident in the densely inhabited, stepped lanes crisscrossing the hill, reminiscent of another time and memory, where narrow streets frame unfolding vistas or suddenly open up to surprising views over the city.



[1]



## CHALLENGE

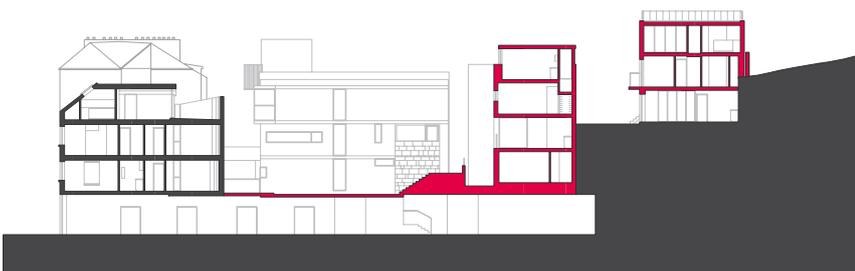
Housing must re-establish itself as the vital reinforcing ingredient to the sustainable urban community. The provision of desirable living solutions that are particular to and understand what constitutes 'home', in the Irish psyche will attract residents who will reclaim and reconnect with their city. In Coppinger Court, working with the historical grain of the area allowed for a dense but sympathetically scaled housing project to develop from the existing 'roots' of the Shandon/ Pope's Quay neighbourhood.

The brief was simply to provide as much residential accommodation as possible on this brown field site, and to try and achieve this while still retaining the quay-front buildings intact, as preferred by the planning authority.

From this brief came the challenge to investigate the principles and requirements of desirable long term urban living and to reinforce the connection with the existing community and urban fabric. This would not just be about retaining the laneways and existing quay-front buildings, but working to a scale and grain that was in keeping with the context.

All apartments and houses would have front door access, either from the quay front or laneways, and each unit would be individually designed, where necessary, to suit its location and orientation. This approach avoids the all too familiar, and often unsatisfactory, 'lift-corridor' type scheme, and allows for a complex layering of a series of public, semi-public and private external spaces.

[2]



Housing must re-establish itself as the vital ingredient in making sustainable urban communities; creating desirable urban living conditions is the solution to getting people to reclaim and reconnect with their city.

[3]

## SOLUTION

The sloping section was used to 'unlock' the full depth of the site, and minimise the vertical travel distance from perceived ground to threshold levels, by stacking units at steps in the section.

The insertion of a plinth to separate commercial uses and car parking from the residential areas gives a pedestrian character to the residential zone. The existing laneways have been substantiated and new walkways and stepped links opened up between them, creating an experience of unfolding vistas as one walks through.

A single lift is provided between the car park at quayside level and an external street three levels up, providing disabled and general access to the higher level units.

The buildings are laid out in a series of terraces and focal point pieces, of varying size and shape to define both the quality of the internal spaces and the equally important external spaces. Inter-linked semi-public courtyard gardens in the centre of the scheme are directly accessible from the private living rooms. These gardens give breathing space and assist natural integration between the residents. Private garden terraces opening from living rooms are either indented or otherwise screened to give privacy.

The south facing site has been used to full advantage with emphasis on openings to the south, east and west. Surfaces capture changing sunlight patterns throughout the day.



Use of render and some timber elements give an atmosphere of domesticity and zinc roofing has allowed flexibility of form, giving an interesting and inhabited roofscape, which allows contrast between new and old. The quay-front buildings have been refurbished using new sash windows, natural slates and lime mortar dash.

The nineteenth century residence received specific consideration to comply with conservation requirements. Its importance is reinforced by retaining its original rear garden and creating an axial view within the new development to its rear elevation.

## LESSONS

This project has grounded itself in the history of the site. The architectural approach has reawakened, through careful selection, existing fabric to be refurbished, reused and reinvented. This process in turn has allowed the contemporary architecture to find its own self assured identity in the expression of the new work.

The strength of this project lies in the recognition of the importance of the resident in the evolving city. The personal 'front door', and individual sense of ownership, tends to contribute greatly to the long term success of residential projects.

[1] The existing laneways have been substantiated and new stepped walkways opened up to create an experience of unfolding vistas as one walks through

[2] The buildings are laid out in a series of terraces and focal point pieces of varying size and shape to define inter-linked semi-public courtyard gardens in the centre of the scheme

[3] Grounded in respect for the history and topography of the location, both the contemporary intervention and the existing fabric are combined in a self-assured new identity for the site



# Adaptive Reuse

## THE MAIN GUARD, CLONMEL

### PROJECT TEAM:

MARGARET QUINLAN ARCHITECTS

PUNCH CONSULTING ENGINEERS

OVERY + ASSOCIATES

GEO C KAVANAGH + CO.  
CHARTERED QUANTITY SURVEYORS

### CLIENT:

NATIONAL MONUMENTS SERVICE /  
OPW

### DATE:

2004

### CONTEXT

The Main Guard was commissioned by James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormond, as the court and administrative centre of the Palatinate of County Tipperary – a feudal structure established in 1328. Ormond was an important figure, being three times Lord Lieutenant and responsible for the creation of the Dublin quays, the Royal Hospital and the Phoenix Park.

The 1675 date of the building is established by documentary sources and by coats-of-arms bearing the date set into the façade. When the Palatinate was extinguished in 1714, it became an Assizes Court. By 1810, it had passed into private ownership and undergone radical alteration in Clonmel's commercial boom. By the 1980s, the building consisted of a spirit-grocery, a pub and living accommodation. It was in a dangerous state and was acquired by Clonmel Corporation in 1986.

The Main Guard stands at the very centre of Clonmel on the axis of the broad main street, facing the neo-Gothic West Gate, a nineteenth century rebuild of the old west gate of the walled town, which closes the vista at the other end.

Research on the Main Guard began in 1990 by Margaret Quinlan as part of a postgraduate programme at UCD. Guided by documentary research, investigation revealed that substantial parts of the seventeenth century building had survived, concealed within the later nineteenth century fabric. This discovery of pre-1700 fabric brought it under National Monuments legislation.

### CHALLENGE

One of the main challenges was the dilemma facing Clonmel Corporation, which had bought the Main Guard as a rambling complex in dangerous condition and intended to sell it to a developer under its 1990 Urban Renewal Scheme. The site designation was based on a Foras Forbartha report which suggested that only the upper front wall had surviving original fabric. The discovery of the original fabric changed everything.

The condition of the building was a major factor – how to keep it standing? What form should the interventions take – secure the nineteenth century form as it stood or unpeel the layers back to seventeenth century?

[1]



The setting of this Renaissance building was of great significance but had been altered. How was this alteration to be handled in the relationship with adjoining buildings?

The insertion of new work into a severely distorted building, the handling of rainwater on the front facade and finding matching stone were some of the lesser problems.

**SOLUTION**

National Monuments legislation now applied to the Main Guard and made the Urban Renewal scheme non-viable. In 1994, Clonmel Corporation, in a generous, forward-looking act, transferred the building to the Office of Public Works at no cost, and a programme of excavation, conservation and restoration began with the aim of developing the site as a visitor centre.

The Borough Engineer and de facto planning officer, Jim Keating, who had facilitated the study of the building, was key in this process. As national monuments were exempt from

planning, no planning application was submitted but there was ongoing briefing and consultation.

The seventeenth century versus nineteenth century form of the building was the major ethical decision. The primary significance of the building was seen to lie in the seventeenth century form and setting. The resolution of the structural problems could also be best met by re-establishing the original structural form. The nineteenth century radical alteration was not a 'valid contribution' (Article 11 *Venice Charter*) but aimed at maximising floor area. The decision to reinstate the earlier form was also supported by the Burra Charter's Articles 17, 18 and 19, which deal with recovery of significance.

The option of retaining the nineteenth century configuration was considered but discarded, as it would have entailed the virtual obliteration of the surviving elements of the original in favour of the preservation of a structure, which itself would have required the replacement of much decayed material.

The immediate setting was reinstated to some degree by the acquisition and part-demolition of the infill buildings to the south and east. This allowed the building to appear to be freestanding.

Decisions on the distortion were to repair anything broken but to keep, and merge into, the existing deformations. Little in the repair work could be made plumb or level, requiring great skill from the National Monuments craftspeople.

In all interventions, care was taken to avoid speculation and to ensure that new elements were clearly



[2]



[3]

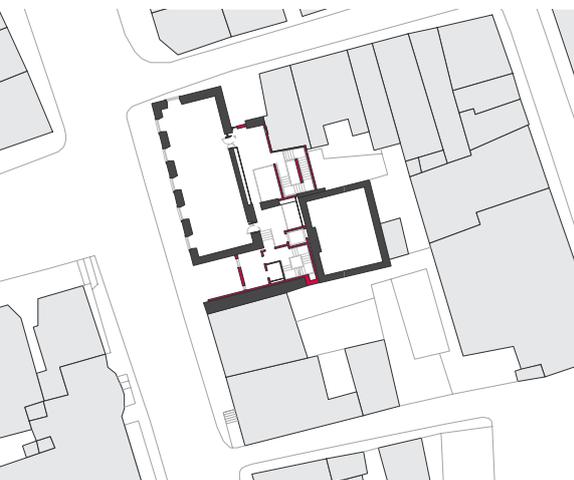
In all interventions, care was taken to avoid speculation and to ensure that new elements were clearly identifiable as being of contemporary construction.

identifiable as being of contemporary construction. No evidence of internal detailing survived and no attempt was made to recreate it.

The original limestone moulded cills survived the 1810 alterations and are now restored to their original positions, off-level due to the deformation of the masonry. The window openings and new limestone surrounds are based on evidence uncovered during the work. No clues were found as to the form of the original windows so the new windows are modern, designed to be in keeping with the character of the building. Sound timber in the roof trusses was retained with new timber pieced in where the decay was advanced. Timber and lead were used in the new deeply recessed infill facades, having a softness where new meets old.

## LESSONS

The overwhelming lesson is the danger caused by lack of knowledge. The Main Guard, apart from its front wall, would have been lost had it not been chosen as a research topic.



[4]

[5]



Fabric analysis, hand-in-hand with documentary research, recovered the original form of the building which was deeply hidden at the outset.

The second lesson was that secondary sources can be misleading. The many puzzles about the building were solved by research in primary sources. Donatus Mooney's Franciscan history of 1615; the original Ormond inventories of the 1670/80s; an unpublished OS map of 1846 giving credence to a semi-diagrammatic map of 1690 and a sentence in a 1778 English traveller's tale; all combined to establish form and significance.

Thirdly, it was very clear that the whole-hearted support of the local authority was vital to the success of the project.

Much of the significance of the Main Guard lies in its setting. The insertion of this simple, classically inspired building transformed the

public realm of the medieval town in a manner characteristic of Renaissance intervention in existing city fabric. The projection of the building into the main thoroughfare created a symmetry and an axial relationship with the West Gate.

The reinstatement of the arcade has transformed the public space of the town, re-establishing a relationship that had been lost in the nineteenth century. It has put the heart back into the town centre and restored its early expression of enlightened civic governance that embodies the ideals of Renaissance urban planning.

[1] The north end of the arcade projecting into Mitchell St.

[2] Meeting of old and new fabric in the return

[3] Side view from the north with the backdrop of the Comeragh foothills

[4] First floor context plan

[5] The structure before work began



## Adaptive Reuse

### THE DAINTREE BUILDING, CAMDEN STREET

#### PROJECT TEAM:

SOLEARTH ARCHITECTS

BURO HAPPOLD

GARDINER AND THEOBOLD  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

#### CLIENT:

DAINTREE LTD.

#### DATE:

2005

#### CONTEXT

The project context is the busy commercial street and backland service lanes of Camden Street, a bustling market street in Dublin's south city. Camden Street is unusual in the city in that it retains what feels like an almost market town ambience. This is perhaps due to its generous width, uniformity of building frontage height – three storey – and the unusual variety of commercial activities – shops, market stalls, residential and institutional – along it. The site is an accumulation of the original streetfront building and the separate plot behind it along with two adjoining plots on Pleasants Place. The one and two storey warehouses and sheds along the lane are an integral part of the setting. Building lines run north south along the street and lane. Buildings are consistently three storeys to the street and largely one to two storeys on the lane – with one exception, a four storey historic school opposite the site.

#### CHALLENGE

The client's brief was to create an 'oasis in the city', a place to live and work, that would be mixed use, vibrant and cutting edge in its use of ecological materials, passive strategies and active technologies.

The main design challenge was to reuse the existing building on Camden Street, giving it due respect and ensuring that it was not overpowered by the bigger building to its rear, creating something that would become its own 'place' in the city. Floor to ceiling heights in the existing shop were quite low and enlarging them carried the risk of conflict with original window openings or falling outside the de-facto height datum extant on Camden Street.

Another challenge was to develop a solution that optimised the north south building line, which militated against utilising solar gain for residences, and the desire to create passive solar apartments.

The main planning challenges were two-fold – convincing the planning authority that Pleasants Place was not a mews lane and shouldn't have these guidelines imposed upon it; and making the argument that a new four storey building on a lane of predominantly two storey sheds was

The client's brief was to create 'an oasis in the city'; a place to live and work, that would be cutting edge in its use of environmental sustainability strategies.

[1]



appropriate and could be achieved without compromising the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Other more detailed challenges included working within the spans and dimensions of original façade and fabric, window openings, cornice lines etc.; accommodating common sewers and combined services from neighbours; and realising a group solution for services at what was a quite modest scale.

## SOLUTION

Design solutions were found through phasing the construction, echoing the three original original plots in the

new building footprint and in folding the different uses over and through each other.

To Camden Street, the strict height limitation was the strongest influencer on the decisions taken in designing the retrofit of the historic building. The plot lines of the assembled sites to the lane at the rear also imposed themselves on the composition of the new, larger building.

The historic building on Camden Street was thoroughly renovated with partial replacement of fabric including some floors. Original window openings and storey lines were matched as closely as possible though for economies of scale it was considered necessary to use the roof space as residential accommodation.

This necessitated raising of part of the ridge which is the only change to the building envelope when viewed from the street. Given the need to add bathrooms and kitchens to each floor, some changes in spatial layout on each floor were also inevitable. The outcome is a balancing of the conflicts between provision of maximum accommodation and the dictates of the original historic building's scale, layout, fabric and particularly height.

For the larger building to the rear, the original plot lines ascribed divisions in the new layout which ensured the new building echoes the scale and grain of the pre-existing structures; the southernmost plot became the open space courtyard hosting the public café and bicycle shed cum art installation. It works as a route linking Pleasants Place to Camden Street during business hours and also serves as a secret garden. The middle plot becomes readable at first floor level, where it functions as a semi-private sunny terrace – the organising space for the residents of the new building.

The existing building line to Pleasants Place was accepted as the main elevation for reasons of urban design coherence, and the inherent disadvantage it presented, being at right angles to the sun, was turned into a positive by locating stairwell and non-residential elements along it. Dwellings – needing heating – were located to the south in the sun and high up in the section, and non-residential – needing cooling – were placed to the north and lower down in the section.

While certain economies of scale of dwelling were lost when a planning application for a fifth storey was rejected in favour of four plus

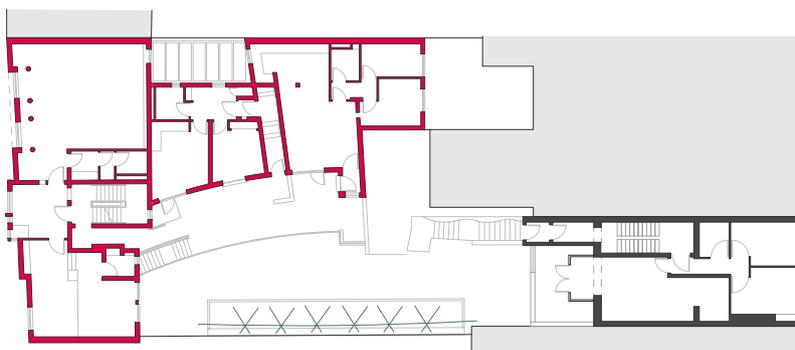
basement, a critical mass of activities was maintained by omitting any car parking on site, thus unlocking flexibility and space. Instead, bicycles were prioritised and the bicycle shelter energised with original works of sculpture based on found objects.

The seven apartments in the new building are individual in layout, each responding to their place in the composition, the solar and view opportunities available and their different sizes. An intention to make them feel more like stacked houses than apartments is achieved by ensuring hallways and bathrooms have natural light and that most have large external private spaces.

The main reuse and conservation successes are that a vibrant, sunny, mixed use building has been created without wholesale destruction of the character and scale of the area's built context, and that the existing building on Camden Street was largely reused.

## LESSONS

Technical lessons ranged from process to detail – each apartment having an individual layout led to higher build costs and did not utilise the rational logic of timber



[3]

[2]



frame as much as it could have; and specification of largely natural materials throughout, including for external envelopes, ran the risk of a need for more regular maintenance – prioritising this in the budget could have ensured weathering was more consistent.

The building is unusual in a number of ways, but it is perhaps the blending of uses and the carving out of a new room in the city's spatial matrix where residents, office personnel and paper craftspeople mix with café loungers and shoppers in a living example of convivial city that is its unique contribution.

[1] The Daintree Building comprises a renovated building to the front and a new four-storey building including a ground floor café to the rear

[2] The project combines a mixture of residential, retail and office uses utilising state-of-the-art environmental strategies in terms of its construction materials and energy strategy

[3] Plan showing renovated building to Camden Street with new mixed use building to the rear lane

[4] Facing Camden Street, the mixed use development conserves the street-front building, including reinstatement of a ground floor retail unit



[4]



## Adaptive Reuse

### BALDOYLE LIBRARY

#### PROJECT TEAM:

FKL ARCHITECTS

DAVIS LANGDON PKS  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

MOYLAN CONSULTING ENGINEERS

MCARDLE MCSWEENEY  
+ ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

#### CLIENT:

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2005

#### CONTEXT

The library occupied two rooms of a dilapidated former RIC barracks on the Strand Road at the approach to Baldoyle from Sutton. The Mall was a triangle of grass at the gable of the library. It was chained off from the footpath and did not invite visitors or suggest the possibility of use. Further along the coast the church of St. Peter and St. Paul sits in an open parklike space, marking the centre of Baldoyle, and was the only civic or urban indicator for the village.

The library building itself, a modest and robust nineteenth century two storey building was in reasonable condition structurally but internally was in a very poor state of repair due to a lack of maintenance and gutters leaking over many years. Part of a matched pair it was barely noticed and made no response to its civic function nor to its location beside the sea. It was unmarked and indistinguishable from the two storey houses which surround it.

#### CHALLENGE

The decision by Fingal County Council to refurbish and update the library, as well as to provide a Local Area Office for the Council, presented the opportunity to not just refurbish the existing building, but to reassess its relationship to the village. The challenge was to redefine the existing green space as a forecourt to the library and Local Area Office and mark its location within the ubiquitous suburban sprawl, between it at one end and St. Peter and St. Paul Church at the other. The building had to signal its public function, to support a wide range of complementary activities and to invite use by as many residents as possible.

The existing building was to be reanimated and extended in a manner that respected both old and new. In doing so the constrained nature of the site and the proximity of neighbours to the rear had to be respected and issues of potential overlooking or overshadowing to be addressed. The opportunity also existed to take advantage of the stunning and ever changing views over the sea to Ireland's Eye.

[1]



## SOLUTION

Initial assessment of the building suggested demolition but on balance the positive presence of the building in the urban context, its history, and the environmental benefits of reuse led to the decision to maintain and extend it. The office and library accommodation are located in the existing shell, circulation, toilets and larger spaces that would not fit within the narrow existing building are located in a new extension.

A blank first floor to the extension avoids overlooking, a compact form avoids overshadowing and a substantial circulation content provides access to new and existing accommodation. This is enshrined in the concept of a manipulated tube which is folded and bent around the existing library, producing a form that signals the public nature of the building by its singularity rather than through excessive scale.

The new construction, forms a loop which begins and ends with a public gathering space focused on Ireland's Eye. Starting at The Mall which allows direct access to the building from a public space rather than from the busy road, and ending at the meeting room at first floor, where the view forms the backdrop to public meetings.

The Mall is remade as a paved civic space which can be used for events and allows the functions of the library to extend beyond the building. It runs under the cantilevered first floor meeting room to provide an exhibition space which can be seen from outside even when the library is closed. It forms a counterpoint to the park which surrounds the church thereby bracketing the village between public spaces.



[2]

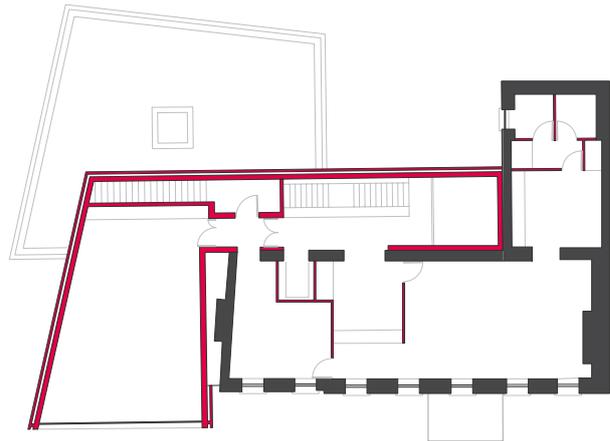
The existing building was a modest building not listed for protection or of any particular importance, but it formed an integral part of its context.

New and existing constructions are given different but complementary languages. The existing building was refurbished externally but due to the state of disrepair, was rebuilt and reorganised internally in a sympathetic contemporary manner which allowed for a functional layout and an upgrade of the energy performance. The public nature of the building is signalled by stone cladding to the new tube, which internally is a robust reinforced concrete structure subdivided functionally by the insertion of a folded plane of timber boards. The rendered walls and slate roof of the original structure contrast with the flat-roofed stone clad new extension, while internally the new concrete tube with its timber lining complements the simple plastered spaces of the original building.

## LESSONS

This project allowed the remaking of the image and understanding of the village of Baldoyle through retaining what was useful in the structure of the existing building and adding what was required with new accommodation, remaking what was worn out in The Mall and the interior of the original building. The original library was a modest building, not listed or of particular historical importance but it formed an integral part of its context and was respected and understood for its physical and cultural value. The fact that it is retained is more important than the detail of it. The integrity and consistency of the approach to the refurbishment attains greater significance when contrasted with the equally rigorous new extension.

[3]

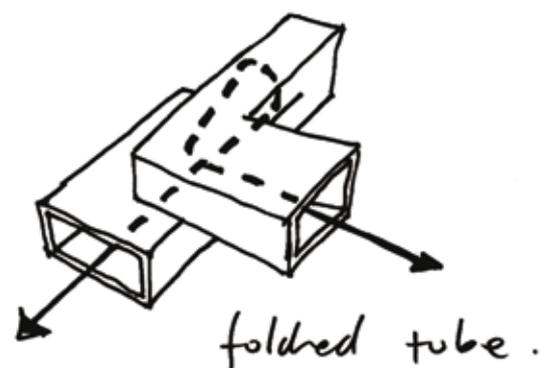


[4]



- [1] The functions of the library extend from under the cantilevered first floor meeting room to provide an exhibition space visible from the street
- [2] The new and existing construction are given different but complementary languages
- [3] Floor plan showing new extension 'wrapped' around the renovated existing library building
- [4] The project design aspired to allow 'the remaking of the image and understanding of the village of Baldoyle'
- [5] Architect's sketch indicating the 'folded tube' concept to integrate the new interventions with the original fabric

[5]





## Adaptive Reuse

### LIFETIME LAB, FORMER CORK CITY WATERWORKS

#### PROJECT TEAM:

JACK COUGHLAN  
ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS +  
CONSERVATION CONSULTANTS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD.

BERNARD SEYMOUR + ASSOCIATES  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

#### CLIENT:

CORK CITY COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2004-2005

#### CONTEXT

The *'Lifetime Lab'* project, a visitor and educational centre based around the theme of sustainable living, was undertaken by Cork City Council, in association with University College Cork, with part funding by EEA EFTA States, Financial Instrument of the European Economic Area, in order to preserve and reuse important landmark buildings and to coincide with Cork City's role as the European Capital of Culture 2005.

Prior to the commencement of this project in 2003, the former Cork City Waterworks, designed by Sir John Benson, had remained unused and largely unmaintained for fifty years but nonetheless had survived remarkably intact.

The site and its associated buildings is included on both the *Record of Protected Structures* and the *Sites and Monuments Record*. Following detailed research and recording of the former waterworks buildings, the site was confirmed as the best preserved Victorian municipal water supply complex in Ireland, and the oldest continuously-used municipal water supply installation in the country (in use from 1760's). Of architectural, historical, scientific, and social significance, the complex also

includes the 1907 engine house which contains in situ the only surviving engines of their type in Ireland.

#### CHALLENGE

The project brief, as defined in the *Cork City Development Plan*, called for the former Cork City Waterworks site to form the focal point of the *Sustainable City Project*, to be redeveloped into a valuable educational, heritage and tourist attraction which would promote awareness of environmental issues and enhance Cork City as a centre of environmental excellence.

The client brief required the principles of sustainable design to be applied to the conservation and adaptation of the complex for new use as education spaces, offices, meeting rooms and interactive exhibition displays on the themes of the environment and sustainability. Given the location of the site and the different floor levels of the building, providing the access for all required by the brief was to prove challenging.

The condition of individual buildings on the site ranged from poor to extremely dilapidated, with the principal problems related to water ingress caused by damaged rainwater

The marriage of the principles of conservation with the requirements of sustainability was the most demanding yet successful element of the project.

[1]

[2]



goods, broken roof lanterns and missing slates. The distinctive building fabric comprising brickwork and local red sandstone interspersed with bands of limestone was in need of attention in many areas, particularly where the sandstone was badly delaminating.

In keeping with the brief, the project required an approach and design to convert existing industrial buildings to fully accessible, comfortable, usable spaces with new electrical and mechanical services while not compromising their historical and architectural character. In addition, a key component of the work was the retention of the existing built industrial heritage including the early twentieth century steam plant.

### SOLUTION

Decisions on interventions into the historic fabric were made with the aim of retaining the maximum amount of historic fabric possible, and respecting the existing spaces. The contract works included stonework and brickwork conservation and repointing, using the original tuck-pointing technique, restoration and repair of timberwork, roof re-slatting with natural slates, leadwork repair, application of new lime render, repair of cast iron railings, limestone steps and granite cobblestones and provision of new landscaping.

Electrical and mechanical services included using renewable energy sources, and incorporating geothermal heat pumps, solar water heating and photovoltaic panels, and hydropower generated on site. The existing buildings are naturally ventilated.

For the new elements modern materials were used to differentiate them from the existing. Zinc sheeting was used to the new entrance lobby with the new lift shaft formed in an exposed concrete having a glazed face overlooking the river, ensuring that the interventions were clearly identifiable.

This freestanding lift was provided at the new entry forecourt having a timber-clad pedestrian bridge to take the lift user to the top of the existing stairs, so that all users commence and complete their journey at the same place. The converted buildings are now fully accessible, with the exception of the historic engine house, where a new, cantilevered viewing gallery was provided from the accessible upper level allowing visitors to view the steam plant in the lower area of the building.

### LESSONS

The end result of the extensive work programme at the waterworks site is the conservation and adaptation of a collection of dilapidated historic structures within a neglected site for a sustainable new use, without compromise to their historic integrity. The new role of the site in promoting the concept of sustainable living and

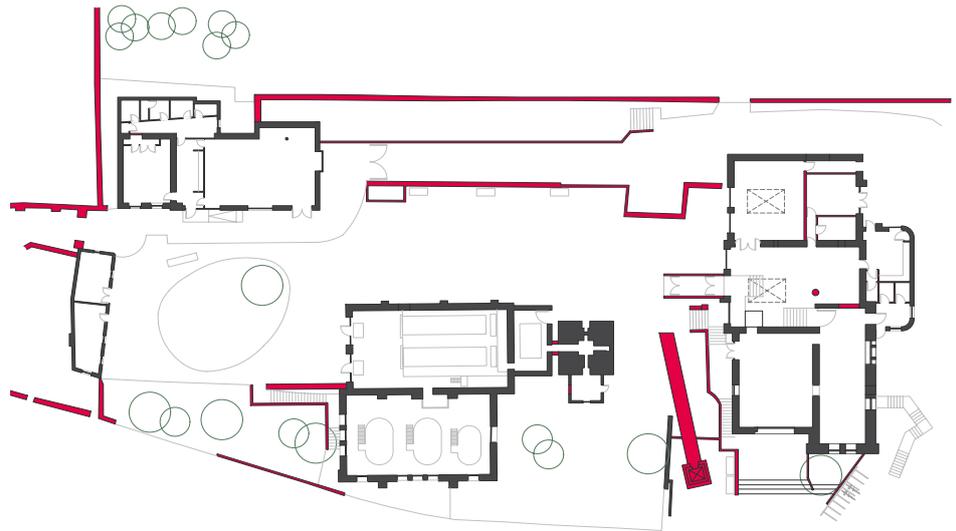
environmental awareness presents an opportunity for the public to visit a previously inaccessible area of Cork.

The marriage of principles of conservation with the requirements of sustainability was the most demanding yet successful element in the project. The buildings were pushed to their limits to achieve the maximum energy sustainability without the loss of character and significance.

The very defined objectives of this City Council-driven project allowed the design team to fully engage with both planners and the conservation officer from the outset and to agree common goals and principles, while formulating the appropriate operation and marketing of the centre at an early stage allowed the architects to finely tune the building layouts to that brief.

- [1] Decisions on interventions into the historic fabric were made with the aim of retaining the maximum amount of historic fabric possible
- [2] The condition of the existing buildings ranged from poor to extremely dilapidated – mostly due to problems with water ingress
- [3] Plan showing new interventions into the existing complex; new elements are differentiated from old through the use of modern materials
- [4] Research confirmed that the former waterworks was the best preserved – and oldest – municipal water supply complex in Ireland

[3]



[4]





## Adaptive Reuse

### LISMORE LIBRARY

#### PROJECT TEAM:

SHAFFREY ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

MALACHY WALSH AND PARTNERS  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

MULCAHY MCDONAGH AND  
PARTNERS QUANTITY SURVEYORS

GERRY GEANY  
ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS

#### CLIENT:

WATERFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2005

#### CONTEXT

The former Christian Brothers Monastery in Lismore is prominently sited on the brow of the gently rising West Street and at the junction of three roads, which define this triangular site. The main facade formally addresses the architecturally significant town of Lismore. The original shallow U-shaped building dates to 1871 and is of the prevalent Gothic style of ecclesiastical / educational architecture of this time. This two story building was enlarged c.1920, the extension adopting the architectural expression of the earlier part, however constructed in mass concrete as opposed to the warm local sandstone of the original. There is a triangular garden to the front, which emphasises the formality of setting and site.

Unusually for most counties in Ireland, Waterford's library headquarters is located in Lismore, not the county town of Dungarvan. A growing imperative for improved book storage, book processing and other related facilities, added to the need to provide a one stop shop and civic offices coincided with a declining residential community of Christian Brothers, leaving the monastery's future uncertain and at risk. In the late 1990's Waterford County Council acquired the building as a new home for the library headquarters and Area Offices. The building housing the library headquarters at that time, itself a fine town building, was sold and has since been well restored as an office and private home.



[1]



**CHALLENGE**

The existing monastery building was too small to accommodate all the facilities and functions of the new uses, in particular the large volumes required for the storage of books. Further, the historic building contained principally cellular rooms of a modest size. However, a large high-ceilinged room in the ground floor of the 1920's extension, with a series of dual aspect windows giving generous natural light and ventilation, suggested itself as a suitable room for the Town Commissioners and the well lit circulation spaces in the historic building allowed for flexibility of room layout and access.

The principal challenge was how to handle, architecturally, the large volumes of the extension, within the context of a strongly coherent existing architectural expression and compact, symmetrical, arrangements of the original and 1920's building.

The latter extension had followed the original in style, albeit adopting modern materials and construction and was a considerably smaller extension to what was now needed.

Another challenge was to maintain the primacy of the historic building while ensuring functionality and accessibility were equally well served.

**SOLUTION**

Book storage and processing required spaces larger than what was available within the historic buildings, without incurring major intervention. These, along with staff canteen and toilets, are accommodated in the single story linear extension, which extends along the eastern boundary of the triangular rear garden, also running alongside the main entrance to Lismore from Fermoy. Each function is expressed volumetrically,

and materially, with alternating copper and lime plaster finishes to reduce the overall reading of mass and form and all are joined by a timber and glass circulation link which opens out onto the south-facing garden. Sedum roofing is used for the lime rendered sections, otherwise the copper cladding fully covers these elements – the views out from the first floor windows of the historic building are an important consideration.

The historic building provides the main public and office functions and an accessible secondary entrance and new lift ensures all parts of the building are fully accessible. Generally a light touch has been taken with regard to the existing buildings, retaining the historic plan form which provides extremely pleasant naturally lit and ventilated rooms. A small delight, which often happens when working with older buildings, was the discovery of a charming painted ceiling which had been covered over and now enhances the county library office.

**LESSONS**

Understanding the intrinsic architectural and urban qualities of the historic building and context, informed a solution which directed the large scale and more private elements of the library headquarters to the new building (extension) and accommodated the more public and cellular office uses within the existing. Thus the historic main entrance remains the principal entrance and this was as important to serve the prevailing urban logic of site and setting, the prominence and centrality of the main entrance

[2]

The decision to adopt a contemporary idiom for the new extension was not made at the outset; rather, it evolved as the most satisfactory solution.

is a significant vista within the town, as it was to satisfy well established conservation principles.

The extensive use of natural copper cladding for the new extension was chosen for its visual and temporal characteristics, as well as durability. In Autumn the mature beech trees which line the opposite side of the Fermoy entrance road, merge in colour with the copper-toned elements of the extension. Over time, these visual relationships will change as the copper itself changes.

The decision to adopt a contemporary idiom for the new extension was not made at the outset, rather it evolved as the most satisfactory solution, following a number of exploratory investigations, to integrating the particularly large volume spaces required by the programme. Contrast may not always be the appropriate solution when adding to historic buildings, concern for an overall integrity – or coherence – of architecture is important. In that way, integration within the wider setting must also be considered.

- [1] Book storage and processing required spaces larger than what was available with the original building structure
- [2] The extensive use of natural copper cladding for the new extension was chosen for its visual and temporal characteristics
- [3] Understanding the intrinsic architectural and urban functions of the original building and its context informed the design solution
- [4] Concern for an overall integrity – or coherence – of architectural expression and integration of the new and old within the wider setting were key considerations

[2]



[3]



[4]



## Adaptive Reuse

### LIVING OVER THE SHOP, NO. 16 CAPEL STREET

#### PROJECT TEAM:

ARCHITECTS – O'BRIAIN BEARY  
ARCHITECTS

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS – DECLAN  
COLLIER ASSOCIATES

SERVICES ENGINEERS – DOMINIC FAY  
ASSOCIATES

QUANTITY SURVEYORS – ANDREW  
NUGENT + ASSOCIATES

FIRE CONSULTANTS – FIRE SAFETY  
ENGINEERS

CLIENT:  
PRIVATE

DATE:  
2006

#### CONTEXT

Capel Street is one of the most historically significant streets in Dublin City, laid out in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; originally a residential street but subject to considerable changes in the intervening centuries, it is now enjoying something of a revival. The street went into gradual decline, with most buildings especially at the southern end, being converted to retail use, with ground floors and railings making way for commercial shopfronts, and with considerable dereliction and vacancy, particularly on the upper floors.

No. 16 Capel Street consisted of an original nineteenth century building, much altered, of five storeys over basement, and a rear early twentieth century extension of similar footprint, of four storeys over basement. Due to the complex history of the site the rear extension had a range of windows in both party walls.

#### CHALLENGE

The upper floors were open floor plates resulting from the brick pier, steel beam and timber joist construction that was employed in the extension. This form of construction was also retrofitted into the Victorian shell, resulting in the removal of all the original internal walls and any original detail at that time. The existing footprint meant there was no light to the middle of the plan, particularly in the rear of the front building. The location of the only stairs to the rear of the building resulted in unsafe travel distances and there was no open space on the site.

The scheme demonstrates the potential for distinctive, contemporary living accommodation on the upper floors of city centre buildings.

[1]



**SOLUTION**

The works to No. 16 Capel Street involved the reuse of the four upper floors of a five storey over basement building to provide loft-style apartments, and works at ground floor and basement level to allow the expansion of the existing retail unit, and to create shared communal facilities for the residents of the upper floors. The works qualified for the 'living over the shop' (LOTS) tax incentive scheme. The works were undertaken prior to the establishment of the Capel Street Architectural Conservation Area.

The two fundamental issues of lack of daylight in the centre of the plan, and of poorly placed vertical circulation, were solved by cutting out two structural bays of the twentieth century extension where it abutted the original building, providing a separating light well and corridor

link between the front and rear apartments, and by placing a new steel framed staircase adjacent to this link in a corner of the rear structure. This divide re-established the distinction between the original build depth and the later extension.

The front apartments were arranged to allow one of the bedrooms operate as a study connected to the living room via the kitchen - a partially glazed connecting screen allows a visual connection through the depth of the plan from courtyard to street. The rear apartments were generally arranged with a L-shaped living dining kitchen space running along the southern, eastern and northern facades.

The courtyard cutout was steel framed and clad in fibre cement panels, the thickness of the assembly being visible at the exposed junctions with the existing brickwork. Each apartment has a balcony opening into the courtyard. The principal amenity space for the residents is the new rooftop decked garden to the rear, screened by metal-framed opal glass panels.

Minimal work was undertaken to the exterior of the existing shell as it was generally in good condition, with the exception of the existing flat roofs which were entirely replaced. Internally, the existing joists and steel beams were strengthened where required. Acoustic and fire separation standards were met by employing a double ceiling system, with the upper fire ceiling completely imperforate. The ceiling heights were determined by the existing building which in the usual eighteenth and nineteenth century manner decrease as one rises through the building, from 3.7 metres at first floor to 2.4 metres on the top floor, with the higher ceilings

on lower levels compensating for lower light levels. Finishes and fittings were chosen with regard to quality, durability and economy. Brightly coloured rubber flooring on acoustic underlay was chosen for all the upper floors for its ease of maintenance and light reflectance value. The communal stairs, built off a single cranked UC section, off which steel plate treads balance, links the entrance hall and communal facilities with the roof garden.

[2]



**LESSONS**

The scheme has demonstrated the potential for distinctive contemporary living accommodation in the upper floors of city centre buildings, including buildings that have a long and complex history of extension and alteration. Such buildings may allow a greater freedom of intervention, because what has previously been lost can not be reclaimed, while at the same time requiring sensitivity to make sense of the story of the building. It also demonstrates the value of the carefully targeted tax incentives such as the LOTS scheme, without which the scheme would not have been initiated.

- [1] Because the building had been previously altered and extended, there was greater freedom of intervention in creating contemporary living accommodation
- [2] Laid out in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a residential street, Capel St is one of the most historically important streets in Dublin
- [3] The plan was formed by cutting out two bays of an early twentieth century extension abutting the rear of the original house, thereby creating a separating light well between the two.
- [4] Undertaken prior to the establishment of the Capel Street Architectural Conservation Area, the works qualified for 'living over the shop' tax relief incentives
- [5] A previous exemplar of 'living over the shop' conservation initiative by Dublin City Council

[3]



[4]



[5]



# Adaptive Reuse

## CHQ / STACK A

### PROJECT TEAM:

MICHAEL COLLINS ASSOCIATES

ARUP STRUCTURAL +  
SERVICES ENGINEERS

RER (PARIS) FAÇADE CONSULTANTS

BRUCE SHAW PARTNERSHIP  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

### CLIENT:

DUBLIN DOCKLANDS  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

### DATE:

2007

### CONTEXT

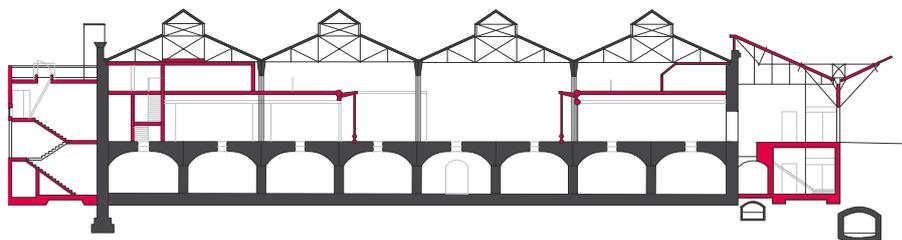
CHQ (formerly known as Stack A) was constructed around 1820 to a design by John Rennie, the renowned Scottish engineer who was responsible for the Tobacco Docks in London as well as Howth and Dun Laoghaire harbours. The ground floor, intended for the storage of tobacco, has brick external walls enclosing a vast space of approximately 7,000m<sup>2</sup> with a sophisticated cast iron frame supporting a slated roof and glazed lantern lights. Basement vaults comprise stone walls and brick arches designed for wine storage.

Over the years, the building has had a great variety of uses, most memorably in 1856 for a banquet for 3,000 veterans of the Crimean War. Changes in use resulted in alterations to the basic building fabric including the internal layout and penetration of the external wall. The most significant alteration was the removal in the nineteenth century of over 4m of the

south end of the building to allow for the widening of the quay and its replacement with a plain brick wall. Poor maintenance in the early part of the twentieth century caused further deterioration of the fabric and structure. When the DDDA took on responsibility for the building in the 1980s, it was virtually derelict and unused. Large areas of the slating were missing and parts of the basement vaults were permanently under water.

### CHALLENGE

Studies on how to conserve the building were commenced in the mid 1990s. The greatest challenges were the repair and cleaning of the cast iron frame and the need to insulate the roof to allow the building to be occupied rather than just used as an unheated store. The cast iron structure had been painted in a lead-based paint, the removal of which presented a



Finding practical solutions to technical problems was challenging but not impossible; finding compatible and sustainable new uses continues to be the biggest challenge for the future of the building.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The DDDA undertook a number of studies of possible uses for the building including exhibition space for a number of different themes ranging from transport and maritime to art and interactive science and technology, combined with an element of commercial/retail use. In the end it was the commercial/retail use that was adopted and promoted for the major part of the ground floor with restaurant/ hospitality use for the basement vaults.

The plain brick south wall was replaced by a planar glass wall set back to allow the vaults to be seen from street level and to allow daylight into the vaults and reinstate the building's connection to the river. An entrance door has subsequently been provided in the south façade in response to the construction of the Sean O'Casey Bridge. A new glazed structure on the west façade facing St. Georges Dock provided access by stairs and lifts to the vaults from outside the building. On the east façade, all of the necessary service entrances, fire escapes, loading bays and building services were housed in compact plant rooms constructed outside the building envelope. Distribution of ventilation and other building services to the vaults was achieved by casting horizontal ducts into the rubble filling over the brick arches. These connect the plant rooms on the east façade with each vault throughout the building. All of the elements of the intervention structures are self supporting in lightweight construction and can easily be adapted to other uses in future, without affecting the historic structure.

safety hazard. There was no access to the basement vaults from within the building. The elimination of the water in the vaults, involved the investigation of underground Victorian culverts and flood valves that prevented the Liffey from flooding the building at

high tide. The original tuck pointing of the external brick walls had been repaired over the years with sand and cement mortar. There was no means of escape, ventilation or providing building services of any kind in the basement vaults.

[2]



The replacement of broken elements of the cast iron structure and cleaning of the old lead-based paint required that the building be enclosed in a temporary sealed enclosure in which dust particles could be contained. The temporary structure spanned over one third of the entire building and was re-located as the work was completed. The sand-cement pointing was raked by hand from the brickwork and re-pointed with tuck pointing.

## LESSONS

This is one of the most impressive and important buildings of its type in Dublin. Its vast scale and intricate detailing are a unique expression of the elegance and durability of cast iron as a structural system and a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of the period. The works that have been carried out by the DDDA will ensure that the building has been conserved in a manner that allows it to be used for a variety of activities. Finding practical solutions to technical problems was challenging but not impossible. Finding new compatible and sustainable uses for the building in the present adverse economic climate continues to be the biggest challenge.

[3]



[1] The existing brick south wall was replaced by a planar glass wall, set back to allow the vaults be seen from street level and to allow daylight penetrate into the lower level

[4]

[2] When taken over by the DDDA in the 1980s, the building was vacant and virtually derelict due to neglect and lack of maintenance

[3] All elements of the new intervention are of lightweight construction which can be adapted to other uses in future without affecting the original historic structure.

[4] Over the years the building has had a variety of uses; in 1856 it housed a banquet for 3,000 veterans of the Crimean War



## Adaptive Reuse

### MOUNTPLEASANT AVENUE, DUBLIN

**PROJECT TEAM:**

DONAGHY AND DIMOND ARCHITECTS

DOWNES ASSOCIATES CONSULTING  
+ CIVIL ENGINEERS**CLIENT:**

PRIVATE

**DATE:**

2007

**CONTEXT**

The project is the conservation and adaptation of a protected structure and its garden for twenty-first century habitation. Built circa 1840 the house was the last infill in this Dublin terrace and is smaller in scale than its earlier neighbours, which occupied larger sites. The original plot extended to a mews lane to the rear. This original curtilage had been curtailed by the separate sale of the mews site thus cutting the house off from the lane.

**CHALLENGE**

The challenge was to conserve the significant fabric of the house and the integrity of its plan, while adapting its section in order to capitalise on its east-west orientation. While the original house provided well-proportioned reception rooms, this resulted in a dark basement kitchen with a 2.1 metre ceiling height. There was no bathroom accommodation. The house was also remote from its garden which had only previously related physically to servant basement level rooms. The brief was to study how best to provide for new residents to reinhabit the house.



[1]

## SOLUTION

The project focuses on making small excisions and additions to provide serviced rooms which can take advantage of site and aspect without compromising the plan of the house. The original return is retained and its spaces used for services to house and garden. The primary intervention is to remove the floor of the rear reception room. This liberates the lower rooms from their oppressed section and opens up the prospect to the church dome to the west, drawing sunlight deep into the plan. The basement becomes a living, dining and kitchen space with the front reception room at entry level, a mezzanine drawing room connected visually to the new space and the garden beyond through a balcony with large shutters.

With the floor removed, the rear wall is opened up with a double height glazed oak screen to the garden. An 'outhouse' is created at the rear boundary by building a new wall of the brick removed from the back of the main house. This new room is roofed by spanning and cantilevering a cast concrete slab (planted roof) between the existing garden walls. It becomes a cave-like retreat with aspect back to the house and garden via a glazed pivot door. If the owners acquire the vacant mews site the brick wall can be removed leaving an open shelter linking courtyard garden and orchard.

The lack of upstairs bathroom was addressed with a version of the traditional 'thunderbox' perched at the eaves of the house, as a lightweight element framed off an oak floor structure and clad in copper. The structure is executed without steelwork, resting on the rear wall and tied back to the stair walls. A new



rooflit open-tread oak-plywood stairs, lit from a rooflight, extends from the existing stairs and upwards to an attic store room.

Ground is excavated in the front yard to provide a bicycle shelter and the spoil used at the rear to consolidate

the level change between paved courtyard and garden. This is then completed with monolithic granite steps, extending the tradition of cut-and-fill on which these terrace houses were grounded. The garden steps down to the new living level which forms the lung of the project.

The approach was to exercise great care in balancing new interventions with the integrity and significance of the existing structure.

## LESSONS

The project demonstrates that houses need not be over-extended in order for them to accommodate evolution of use. The integrity of an existing structure may be consolidated, augmented and enhanced by carefully operating within its constraints.

In order to operate surgically and effectively, the form and physiology of a structure and its curtilage must be recorded, studied and understood. The structure therefore informs the way it is worked upon and the way it might be inhabited.

Successful adaptation of inherited urban contexts relies on understanding the immediate built fabric and making adjustments in relationship to both the structure at hand and the wider borrowed landscape.

Conserving the garden as part of the house and urban landscape is integral to sustainable reuse. Reference to the Dublin City Council: *Lower Rathmines Road Conservation and Urban Regeneration Study* underpins and reinforces the approach taken.

While the garden structure is not on the original mews site, but in the garden, some of principles from the *Conservation and Urban Regeneration Study* apply to the

approach taken in building the garden room in a modern idiom supported by the original garden walls and built from materials found and reused on site with a sedum roof presenting a planted elevation to the windows looking down from the terrace at upper levels.

The approach taken is one of exercising great care in the balancing of new interventions with the integrity and significance of the existing structure, including its curtilage, in order to accommodate new inhabitation through considered architectural adjustments.

[1] The absence of an upstairs bathroom was addressed with the addition of a version of the traditional 'thunderbox' perched off the eaves of the rear elevation

[2] Built in the 1840s, the house was the last infill structure in a terrace of larger adjoining houses

[3] Cross section showing the house and new garden structure.

[4] A new roof-lit open-tread staircase of oak plywood construction extends from the existing stairs

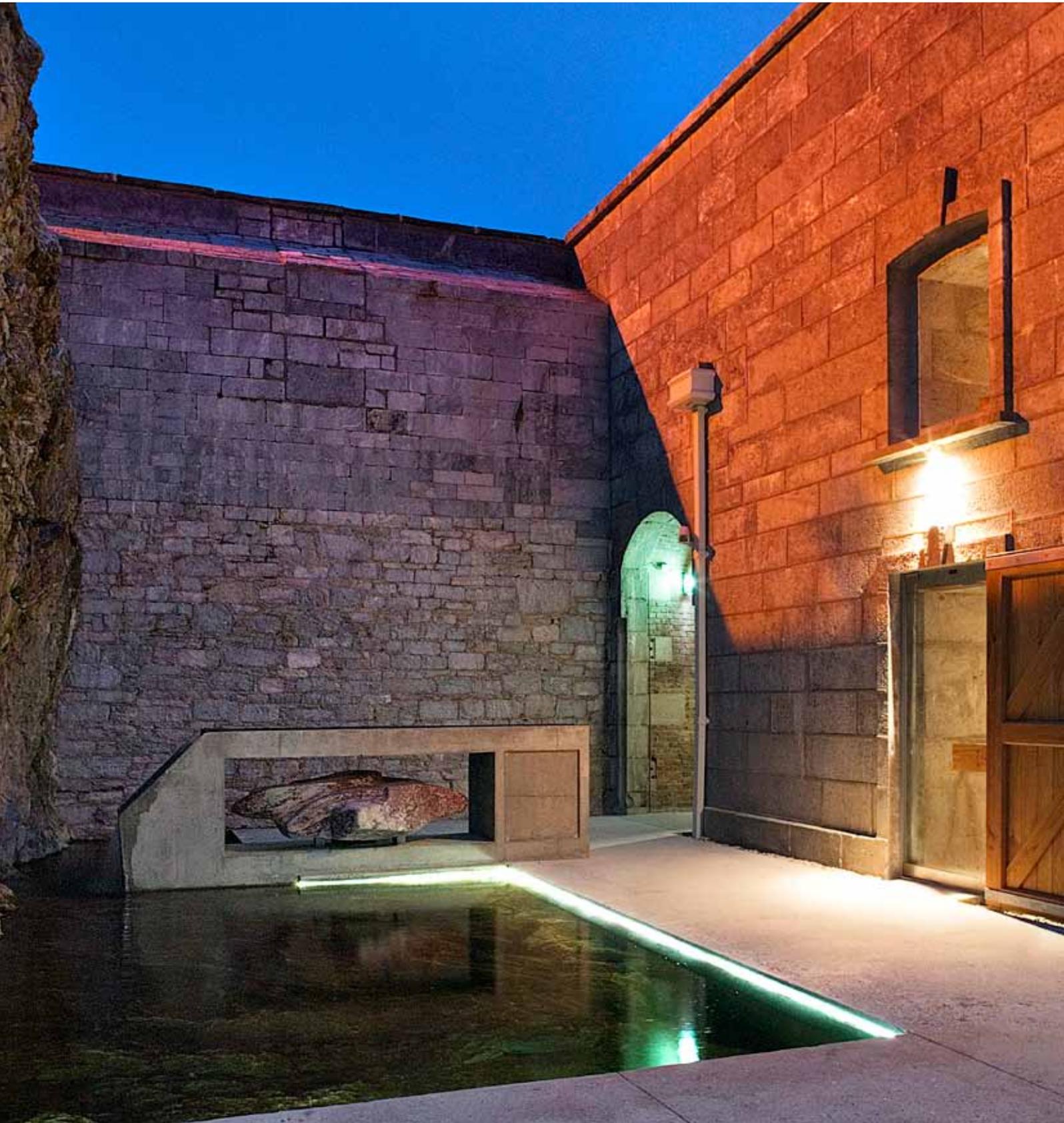


[3]

[2]



[4]



## Adaptive Reuse

### THE ISLAND CREMATORIUM

#### PROJECT TEAM:

MAGEE CREEDON KEARNS  
ARCHITECTS

ARUP

MICHAEL BARRETT PARTNERSHIP  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

MULLIN DESIGN ASSOCIATES  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

#### CLIENT:

LOUIS AND KATE RONAN

#### DATE:

2006-2007

#### CONTEXT

Rocky Island, a small island in Cork Harbour, is an inspired location to site a crematorium. The site had the required industrial zoning with easy access from Cork City and a suitably scenic setting. On inspection, a gunpowder store, dated 1808, was revealed, with great potential for conversion to the new use.

Historical research established that the island was originally a pointed rock of limestone. The stone was extensively quarried for use on the military and naval works throughout Cork Harbour and the resultant holes were then re-inhabited with a pair of gunpowder stores. These were composed of a series of parallel brick-vaulted spaces contained within the sunken courtyards. One of these buildings was destroyed when a pair of concrete bridges was constructed in 1966, to link Haulbowline Island to the mainland. However one store remained relatively intact, reached by a passageway cut through the rock.

The physical uncovering of the fabric, and the process of surveying and drawing it, led to an understanding of the construction and use of the gunpowder store, instilling confidence into the work that followed.

#### CHALLENGE

The challenge was to take this military building with the purpose of destroying human life and reinvent it with new meaning as a place for the celebration of human life, with a spirit of tranquillity that the living could mark and remember the departure of the deceased with dignity. It was to be suitable for final rituals for all denominations, be spiritual and yet avoid any reference, intentional or accidental, to religious symbolism.

The challenge was to take this military building, with its purpose of destroying human life and reinvent it with a spirit of tranquility as a place for the celebrating of life.

[1]



has been cleaned, revealing a warm-coloured, textured backdrop. A rhythm of niches along one side has been screened with cast glass and backlit. The central recess has been widened to provide a setting for the catafalque. The backdrop to the catafalque is a sand-blasted glass screen, day-lit from behind by a new opening in the roof which floods light into the repository, giving a mysterious glow. A new exit has been tunnelled from the second courtyard opening a dramatic view over the harbour.

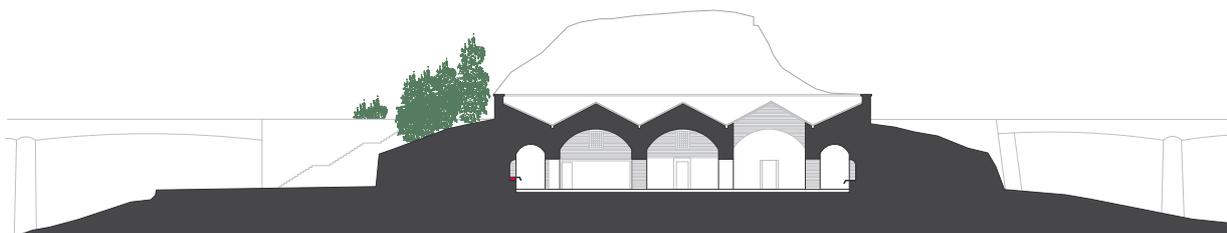
The materials used for the new works are informed by nineteenth century military buildings. Chunky oak shutters were made for the external openings. Copper and glass lanterns in the passages are based on a nineteenth century design. New materials are introduced and are honestly expressed to complement the existing structure, as seen in the acoustic panels, required to reduce the reverberation time in the spiritual space. These are set into deliberately weighty steel frames with crafted hinges, allowing subdivision of the space to create a more intimate enclosure for small groups. Other materials such as seashells and quartz chips in polished concrete are to evoke thoughtfulness and memory. The design of some elements involved

## SOLUTION

The approach to the island arrives on a high plateau looking over the harbour. The route winds down an avenue lined with new scots pines and along the water's edge. The original gateway, with its classical limestone surround marks the entrance to a winding stone cobbled path which leads through a cave-like passage into the first courtyard,

where the sound of water falling into a new pool takes the mind away from the outside world. One side of this courtyard is formed by the imposing cut stone façade of the main building. The opening to the central brick vault, now the main spiritual space, had previously been broken, allowing its further widening, giving easy passage of the funeral cortege. The entrance is asymmetrically framed in new white marble. Internally, the brickwork

[2]



collaboration with artists such as the local marble piece inset in the external catalfalque by the pool.

### LESSONS

We are at a very interesting moment in the history of Cork Harbour, as the transition from natural harbour, to strategic military hub, to industrial and commercial harbour, is now being imagined again. It is hoped that the success of this project will encourage and inform other works to the significant historic military infrastructure of the harbour. Although these buildings can seem rigid in their layout they can be re-imagined in a myriad of different ways and pertinent, privately funded projects can contribute much to the protection of important architectural heritage.

[3]



- [1] Rocky Island, a small island in Cork Harbour, was an inspired location for a crematorium; combining an industrial zoning with easy access to the city and a suitably scenic setting
- [2] Research indicated that the limestone island was extensively quarried for naval and military construction works, and the resulting hole was inhabited with a pair of gunpowder stores
- [3] The design principle was to keep the structural interventions to a few strong gestures, stripping the building to its original form and inhabiting the spaces in an easily reversible arrangement
- [4] The materials used for the new works are informed by the nineteenth century military architecture and honestly expressed to complement the existing fabric



[4]



## Adaptive Reuse

### FUSE, LENNOX STREET

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
BOX ARCHITECTURE

LOHAN + DONNELLY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

FLYNN MCNALLY  
MCKELL PARTNERSHIP  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

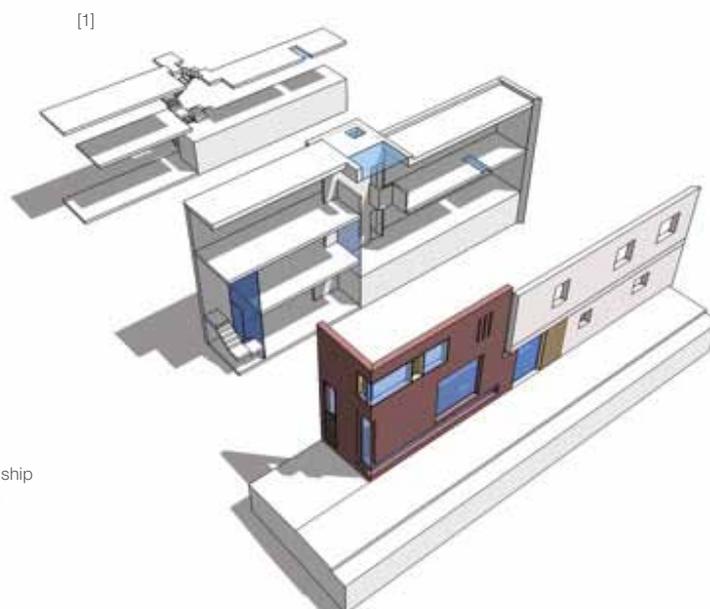
**CLIENT:**  
FUSE

**DATE:**  
2007

### CONTEXT

The client, an expanding graphic design company owned two small adjacent buildings on the corner of Synge Street, a residential terrace, and Lennox Street, a mix of commercial and residential, in Dublin 8. The proposal was to demolish the poorly constructed 1950s commercial premises, in order to extend the office space of the remaining building which, although not a protected structure, provides a link to the existing fabric of the street.

The site was narrow, 20.5 x 3.5 metres, and was a left over space at the junction of the two streets with the commercial premises on Lennox Street once overlooking a canal basin. The 1950s building was an anomaly in the existing streetscape as it was in disrepair and subject to vandalism. The new proposal was intended to contribute to the urban fabric of this street and the new elevational treatment responds to both the neighbouring buildings and the urban context of the site.



[1] Architect's drawing illustrating the relationship of the new extension to the original 1950s commercial building on the site

[1]



## CHALLENGE

The brief was to provide a modern office building to meet current building standards and a creative working environment; increase the efficiency of the building and provide additional functional space for a growing company; and create a hierarchy of private and public spaces, with designated private offices, open plan working spaces and a client meeting room.

27 Syngé Street has been part of a residential street since it was constructed. Unlike the opposite corner, No. 30, where the architecture turns the corner, No. 27 has an existing side garden and end gable condition instead. In contrast Lennox Street, between Lennox Place and Kingsland Parade, is a

commercial street, three storeys high, with shops at ground floor and accommodation over.

The predominant brick used in these earlier properties was a brown Dolphin's Barn. The area opposite the site, where the canal basin once existed, was built at a later stage and constructed in a Victorian style using red brick. The once side garden, now 27A Syngé Street, had a poor, more modern structure in red brick, (circa 1940/50's), with pebble dashing at first floor level, an entrance off Syngé Street, and beside this a single storey over-basement derelict structure. The challenge, from a conservation point of view, was how to repair a street, tie in a poor red brick twentieth century addition at odds with the general street, and resolve the different parapet heights to create a sympathetic modern building.

## SOLUTION

The site was long and narrow and the location of the entrance was key. The decision was made to move the entrance onto Lennox Street, being more appropriate than the residential nature of Syngé Street. Moving the entrance also maximised the space available and created a double height, top lit space with the circulation behind a wall concealing how one moves through the differing levels. The new elevation proclaims the extension to be a modern intervention through its contemporary style whilst using contextual materials. The new facade interlocks three dimensionally with the façade of the retained building to create a coherent composition of new and old. On an urban scale the new extension acknowledges its position as a building with a view to the canal. The line of the adjacent parapet level is broken as the new build steps up slightly repeating a condition, which occurs further along the street.

Brick was selected to clad the extension, referencing the existing material of the retained building, with the new brickwork responding to the tones of the neighbouring brick buildings on Lennox Street. The new entrance is defined by a recessed large opal glass screen and adjacent timber door. The recess emphasises the sense of entrance and re-appropriates the language of the adjacent shop fronts on Lennox Street. The brick skin is punctured by glazed openings informed by the interior spaces. The glazed band at street level provides clerestory natural lighting to the basement area. This glazed band wraps around the corner vertically to acknowledge the laneway and, in conjunction with a

The proposal was designed to contribute to the urban fabric of the street with a new intervention responding to the adjoining buildings and the local context generally.

window above the side door, provides additional light to the basement area in the afternoon.

At ground floor level, a large picture window provides a view to the street from the meeting room. This window has timber ventilation panels to each side, and externally the brick skin is detailed to conceal this panel so the window appears as a simple glazed opening. Internal glazed screens are used to both ends of the meeting room and basement to provide views to the double height voids within the building and to the street beyond. This visual link between levels provides a sense of how this complex building works and orientates the occupant.

At first floor level, rooflights above a light shelf provide reflected natural light to the open plan workspace, views are provided by a large corner window and three slit windows provide more focused intimate views and allow increased occupant control.

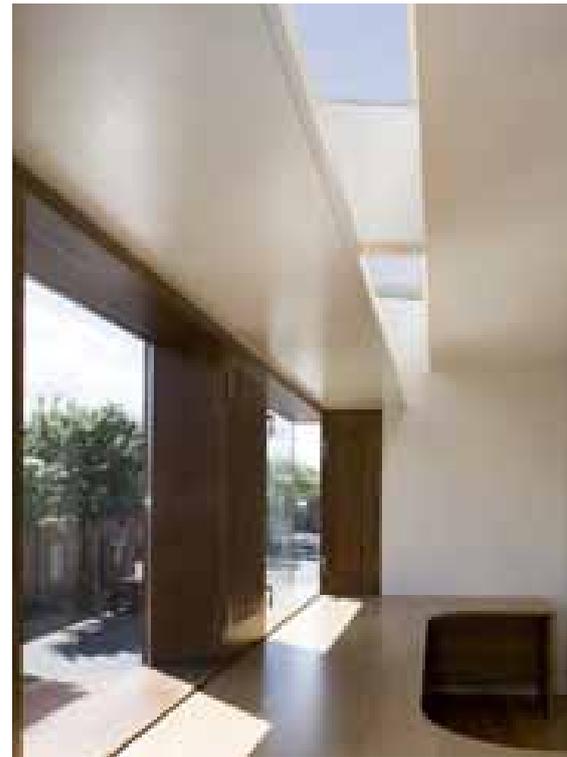
The combination of tall voids, carefully positioned rooflights and clear internal glazing screens ensures natural light enters all areas of the building from multiple sources and the occupants have a sense of openness and space within this relatively small building. The vertical glazing at the stairwell, defines the link between the old and new, and provides a consistent visual reference to the external surroundings. Externally this glazing defines the break between the two buildings, enhancing the interplay between old and new.

## LESSONS

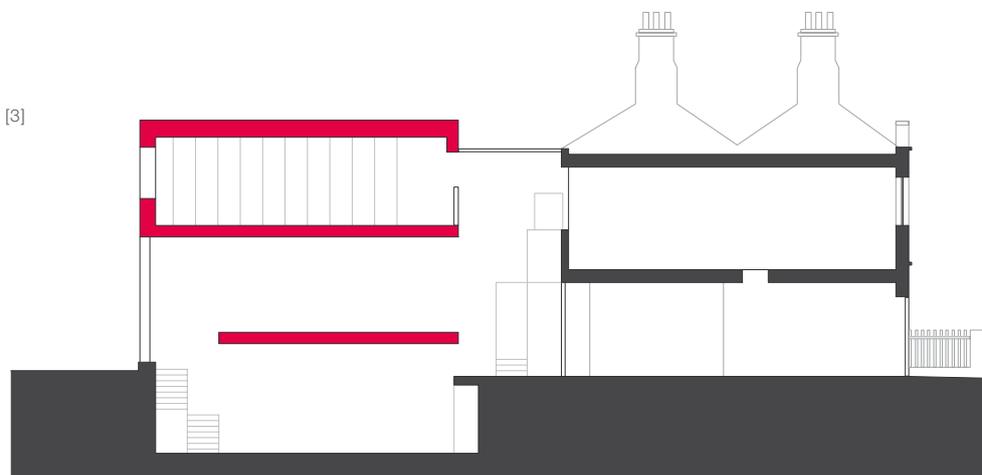
The site was possibly the largest challenge and its size made it very difficult to construct. From a design point of view perhaps the best lesson learnt was that initial research and studying of the context were invaluable. With established streetscapes there are very small details that at first glance get missed, but with some time spent these little differences become evident – brick coursing, chimney details etc – and transfer into the design and aid in the integration of a modern building into an established context.

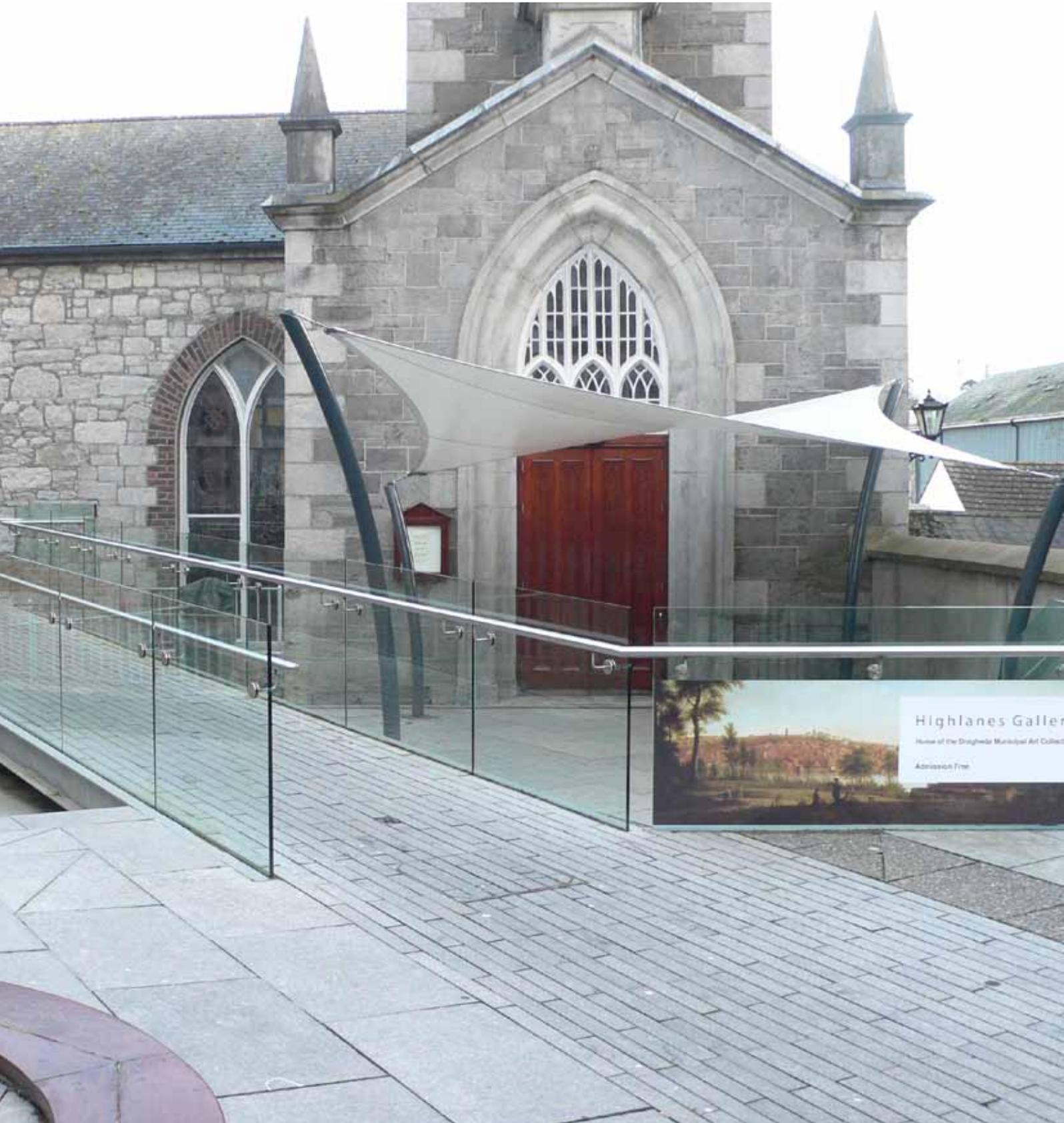
- [1] The new elevation is expressed as a modern intervention which utilises complementary materials to create a coherent composition of new and old
- [2] At ground floor level, a large picture window provides a view to the street from the main meeting area
- [3] A combination of voids and carefully considered rooflights ensure that natural light enters the depth of the building

[2]



[3]





Highlanes Gallery

Home of the Drogheda Municipal Art Collection

Admission Free

## Adaptive Reuse

### THE HIGHLANES GALLERY, DROGHEDA

#### PROJECT TEAM:

MCKEVITT ARCHITECTS

MCCABE DELANEY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

DELAP + WALLER LTD.

JMQS QUANTITY SURVEYORS

#### CLIENT:

DROGHEDA BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2008

#### CONTEXT

The Franciscan Order has been a presence in Drogheda for over 750 years. The Franciscan Church, known locally as 'The High Lane' was constructed in 1829. The late Georgian Gothic church is built into a steep slope that rises from the south river quay towards Laurence Street, architecturally the most significant street in the historic town. The church has the unique features of entrances at ground and at church gallery level, the main street access from Laurence Street being on to the deep rear church gallery.

The Franciscans decided to close the church and the adjoining residence in 2000 and during the next two years meetings were held with representatives of the community with a view to deciding on an appropriate future use. Drogheda was fortunate that a municipal art collection had been assembled between 1940 and 1960. The Franciscans decided to gift the building to the people of the town as a venue to house the art collection.

#### CHALLENGE

The property had been maintained in good repair. The church is built on a T Plan with galleries in each arm and the challenge was to overcome the problem of fragmented access and provide a substantial exhibition gallery floor at the Laurence Street level. The main floor and nave of the church is set 4.5 metres below the Laurence Street level. The challenge was also to create a contemporary art gallery space while retaining features of the existing building including the galleries and the three-bay Tudor Gothic reredos with large mouldings and colonettes rising to pinnacles.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The solution was to overlay the galleries with a floating floor of sufficient area to serve as a large exhibition space at Laurence Street level. The Development Committee had also purchased an adjoining residential building located on the street east of the church. Visually related to the design of the reredos, the facade of this building consists of three bays of two stories expressed as three giant blind pointed arches framing square headed windows. This building, together with the site of an already demolished sacristy directly to the rear, provided a site which could accommodate the services necessary to an art gallery including lift, toilets, kitchen stores and plant. This space now provides a cafe and craft shop at street level.

It was considered important that the building would provide lettable commercial units to subsidise the running costs of the gallery. The floor of the original church provided a lower gallery space which is wonderfully articulated by the existing cluster shafts that support the deep back gallery.

A suspended plenum ceiling below that of the original plaster ceiling distributes services and lighting to the upper gallery. This space is normally subdivided with movable walls which provide great flexibility to gallery exhibitions. The gallery can be entered through the craft shopfront on Laurence Street or through the nineteenth century church gates which direct the visitor across a bridge like ramp rising from street level to the floor level of the new gallery floor.



[2]

This project alters a cherished but redundant church and returns it as a working building to the community that proudly funded and built it.

[3]

## LESSONS

The original fabric has been substantially retained. The approach has been to overlay the existing and it is conceivable that the new insertions could be removed and the building returned to its original form.

The interior when viewed from the front of the reredos explains the building and shows all the original church gallery fronts tucked under the new layer of floor. The existing reredos which can be viewed from both gallery floors becomes an integrated sculpture in the space and is quite at home in the redesigned space. Contemporary elements are harmonious with the traditional. The mid nineteenth century windows record unusual saints most colourfully and also remain in place. Old and new coexist happily.

This project alters a cherished but redundant church and returns it as a working building to the community that proudly funded and built it.

[1] The approach to the conservation of the original fabric has been to overlay the existing with new insertions which could be reversed if required to enable the building return to its original form

[2] Drogheda was fortunate that a municipal art collection had been assembled between 1940 and 1960. The Franciscans decided to gift the building to the people of the town as a venue to house the art collection

[3] This project alters a cherished but redundant church and returns it as a working building to the community that proudly funded and built it





## Adaptive Reuse

### HERITAGE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, KILKENNY

#### PROJECT TEAM:

CONSARC DESIGN GROUP

OPW ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES

OPW CIVIL AND STRUCTURAL  
ENGINEERING SERVICES

OPW MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL  
ENGINEERING SERVICES

OPW QUANTITY  
SURVEYING SERVICES

OPW PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

#### CLIENT:

THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

#### DATE:

2006-2008

#### CONTEXT

The former Bishop's Palace is located within the historic St. Canice's Cathedral complex of Kilkenny. The site was the subject of a Conservation Plan in 2000 by the Integrated Conservation Group. Specific conservation policies were drawn up, significant elements identified and subsequent proposals were made with reference to this document. The original core of the building is a medieval tower with an adjoining vaulted hall-house. There were alterations to the fabric in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries including an extension to the rear, which houses two fine rooms at ground and first floor level. In the early nineteenth century an existing dormer floor was removed and a third floor added above the medieval halls giving the present arrangement.

Consarc Design Group was responsible for the initial design and planning application for the change of use from Bishop's Palace to Headquarters for the Heritage Council along with associated internal works and provision of a new pavilion and services building. The Office of Public Works became involved from project development stage to completion.

#### CHALLENGE

The brief was to provide modern office, meeting and conference facilities while expressing the unique historic phases of architectural development of the building. The pavilion was conceived as a contemporary building using modern materials and technology. Universal access was to be provided throughout and fire issues had to be addressed for a single staircase building.

The Heritage Council wished to demonstrate that 'it is entirely appropriate that an old building can be extended in a modern architectural language, in a historic process of evolution that reflects the multiple layers of evidence of change that were to be found in this, as in many other, older buildings'.

Works were to be achieved within the Conservation Plan framework and in accordance with accepted principles of conservation. The historic building was not to be returned to any one phase of its varied development but features of significance or exposed during the course of works would be assessed and decisions made as to how they should be presented in the overall building context. New interventions were to be read as such

[1]



and designed in a modern idiom to respect and enhance the character of the existing building.

## SOLUTION

The investigation process commenced by the Conservation Plan was continued throughout the project. Works were structured to allow fabric assessments to be carried out in advance of the main contract. These revealed interesting and challenging information about the phased development of the building and resulted in a number of changes to the original proposals.

External sand cement render from the 1960's was removed by hand exposing various periods of limestone construction. Medieval opes with chamfered surrounds and a rare

seventeenth century oak window were among features revealed and incorporated into the design. Extensive masonry repairs were also carried out.

Opening up works identified potential service routes. Cables were run through existing voids and wireless fittings used where possible. Floor mounted pedestal units were wired from the floor void and are low impact and reversible.

Structural repairs and fire compartmentation were required throughout. Lath and plaster ceilings were carefully cleaned and a fire barrier was fixed to the primary structure. A secondary escape stair was provided to the least visible south west elevation to provide an alternative escape from the top floor and gable room on the first floor. There was photographic evidence

of a Victorian stair and balcony arrangement to the first floor in this location. The spiral stair was kept away from the building and supported by a column and concrete base.

The balustrade of the finely detailed 1730's staircase was significantly lower than permitted by regulations for a working office. A modern secondary handrail was fitted, independent of the existing joinery to retain its historic architectural clarity, and this can be removed with minimal impact.

The main entrance ramp is of local Kilkenny limestone with steel handrails. Kilkenny limestone has been used throughout to tie both the historic and modern structure together, honed on internal floors and flamed in external area. Cladding to the new pavilion base has a sawcut finish.

## LESSONS

Research before the project is undertaken is critical. The existence of the Conservation Plan in this case was invaluable as a guiding document for decisions and this continued to evolve throughout the process as more information became available.

Access to a broad range of specialist advice is necessary for a holistic understanding of the building fabric. It is also essential to have specialist contractors involved who understand historic construction and principles of conservation.

A programme of opening up before any works are undertaken greatly improves the quality of decisions

The Heritage Council wished to demonstrate that an old building can be extended in a modern language, in a historic process of evolution that reflects multiple layers of evidence of change.

[2]

made and mechanical and electrical routes should be fully considered at this stage.

The ability of all involved to view the works as a continuing process is vital. Being open to discoveries can provide opportunities for elegant solutions to design challenges - for example, the exposure of the historic brick paving and walls on the ground floor provided a structure for ramps to accommodate level changes within the building. The brick floor and medieval masonry can now be enjoyed by all visiting the pavilion.

The project has successfully met the requirements of modern office use within a complex historic setting. The thoroughness of research and the creative working relationship between traditional skill sets on site has enabled the project to present new and exciting evidence of the building's evolution while preserving original fabric and historic character.



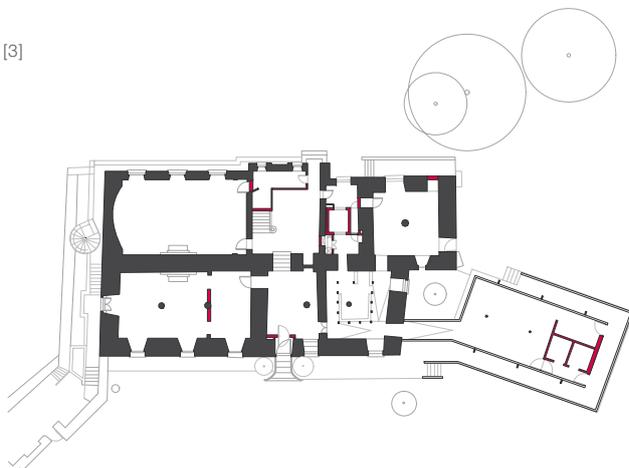
[1] The brief was to provide modern office, meeting and conference facilities while expressing the unique historic phases of architectural development.

[2] The original core of the building is a medieval tower with an adjoining vaulted hall house. There were alterations to the fabric in the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries

[3] Floor plan: the pavilion was conceived as a contemporary building using modern materials and technology

[4] The former Bishop's Palace is located within the historic St. Canice's Cathedral complex of Kilkenny

[3]



[4]





## Adaptive Reuse

### A WALL FOR THE QUEEN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

DENIS BYRNE ARCHITECTS

ROGER CAGNEY ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

KEN O'CONNOR ASSOCIATES  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

LUCAS ENGINEERING SERVICES LTD.

#### CLIENT:

CARROLLS IRISH GIFT STORES

#### DATE:

PHASE 1 – 2005-2007

PHASE 2 – 2007-2009

#### CONTEXT

Situated in the hotel district adjacent to Dublin's main bus station, an end-of-terrace pair of Late Georgian buildings were in very poor condition, with No. 33, the end building, being in an advanced state of dereliction. This building has a very fine side elevation, unusual for the Georgian type, on to Deverell Place. It consists of a magnificent full gable of sixteen blank windows complete with brick flat arches, granite cills and a *tour de force* lower side wall, pilastered, rusticated and niched in Roman cement, built in 1900 for the arrival of the Queen. The side elevation, monumental in scale in comparison to the locally prevalent Georgian domestic, provides the short side street with a memorable urban presence. The new owner wished to renovate and restore the existing buildings and to construct new additions to maximise floor space for speculative use.

#### CHALLENGE

The task was to insert a modern building of four storeys over double basements onto a small urban site to combine with the refurbished Georgian buildings and a monumental decorated side wall in order to provide an efficient layout for marketable space. The existing two adjoining buildings, one a near-ruin and the other a small hotel, were to be restored and upgraded to meet current standards. The architectural challenge, beyond the functionalities of the brief, lay in knitting together the old and new parts to produce a coherent whole that simultaneously addressed the differing front, side and rear urban contexts.

[1]



**SOLUTION**

The existing two storey rear returns to the front buildings, a symmetrical pair of side pavilions, suggested how the new constructions might complete a new courtyard whilst preserving the integrity of the restored Queen's wall to the side. The new building volume was carefully designed to provide a symmetrical completion to the internal courtyard and to recede from the line of the retained wall. The building strategy was discussed and agreed with the planning authority conservation officer. The new wings connect the existing buildings to the new four storey rear mews building in a synthesis of old and new. A new line of clerestorey windows, positioned above the Queen's wall, integrate the old and new pavilions under a modern glazed cornice. The new building confronts the rear of the existing buildings with a single opening, a colossally proportioned version of the traditional Georgian window that speaks to the original across the courtyard and plays a knowing game of scale. The current uses of the buildings are office use for No. 33 and the two new lower rear floors, with hotel use for No. 34 and the three new upper rear floors, in an interlocking arrangement.

The first phase comprised refurbishment works to the front buildings consisting of the rebuilding of the top floor and roof of No. 33, including the complete reinstatement of floors, walls, ceilings, doors and windows, and the cleaning and re-pointing of all facades to No. 33 and No. 34. No 34 remained in use as a hotel throughout the works.

During phase two the Queen's wall was stabilised and propped to allow the excavation works for the new buildings to take place. The

[3]



[2]



new building is faced in brick and lime mortar with copper wall and roof cladding to the courtyard. The Queen's wall was carefully surveyed and restored using Roman cement plaster to match the original.

**LESSONS**

The buildings of the city possess many gradations of value. It is universally understood that the monuments and major public buildings must be retained and cherished, but the solid, more ordinary buildings that provide a background for these set-pieces are profoundly affected by circumstantial issues of fashion, economics and timing. This can render them vulnerable to predatory forces, but as it is these buildings that provide a city with its essential character, their continuous incremental improvement is probably as important as the grand urban gestures.

This project dealt with the rehabilitation, adaptation and reuse of two ordinary buildings and one

Many civic improvements were undertaken for Queen Victoria's visit to Dublin in April 1900. The side wall at 33 Gardiner Street Lower is one such project. It has now been restored to commemorate a private gift to public grandeur.

extraordinary wall; a wall that, lifted by decoration from the merely functional, makes a place out of a side street and an elevation from very little. This character was retained and amplified by the restoration of the strong surface modelling and by the careful control of the new works in relation to the side street and wall. These new works were limited to a new glass cornice and a minor opening, with the new four storey volume recessed behind and relating mainly to the rear lane.

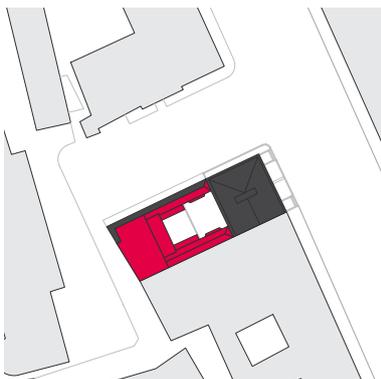
The new works were designed to be 'loose fit'; they had no pre-determined use during construction and were ready to become apartments, offices or commercial spaces. In this sense they could be considered to be analogous to the Georgian room typology, that most useful and flexible civic building block.

- [1] The task was to insert a modern building of four storeys over double basements to combine with the refurbished Georgian buildings and a monumental side wall to provide an efficient layout for marketable space
- [2] The architectural challenge of the brief lay in knitting together the old and new parts to produce a coherent whole that simultaneously addressed the differing front, side and rear urban contexts
- [3] The end-of-terrace pair of Late Georgian buildings were in very poor condition, with No. 33, the end building, being in an advanced state of dereliction
- [4] New works were limited to a new glass cornice and a minor opening, with the new four storey volume recessed behind and relating mainly to the rear lane
- [5] Plan showing the relationship of new to old
- [6] This project dealt with the rehabilitation, adaptation and reuse of two ordinary buildings and one extraordinary wall

[4]



[5]



[6]





# Adaptive Reuse

## RUSH LIBRARY

### PROJECT TEAM:

MCCULLOUGH MULVIN ARCHITECTS

CYRIL SWEETT  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

BARRETT MAHONY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

MCARDLE MCSWEENEY ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

### CLIENT:

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

### DATE:

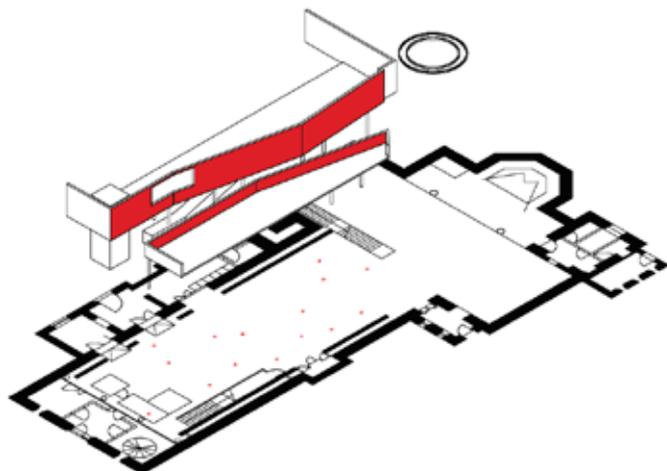
2006-2009

### CONTEXT

This project forges a meaningful synthesis between old and new through the making of a library in a disused church in a small town by the sea.

Very often these are the buildings that can best provide a focus for the animation or creation of public spaces, largely because of the collective memories and associations that have grown up around their use by successive generations. This makes the retention of the special interest of such structures of paramount importance when adapting them to new requirements.

St Maur's Church dominates the village green at the western edge of Rush, a town that is essentially one long street without a legible centre. The church, built in 1835, was deconsecrated in the 1980s but remained in use as one of the town's few public buildings, initially serving as a local arts centre until 2007, when technical problems with the building fabric called for a comprehensive reassessment of its future by the owners, Fingal County Council. The Council's plan was to retain a small arts centre, while providing Rush with the library it never had and a meeting place for the town's many clubs and societies. The new library was also intended to anchor the community's cultural quarter around Chapel Green, which includes the ruins of a windmill, a youth centre and a small theatre.



Extending the active use of small public buildings is vital to maintaining the social life of rural towns, particularly where the original function has ceased.

[1]

## CHALLENGE

The challenge was to investigate the existing structure, a prosaic container of space, ready for change, with a particular concern for the rescue and repair of some rather ordinary materials and to make a distinctive modern intervention to support the new uses. The design team was also on the lookout for evidence of an earlier, eighteenth century Penal church that was believed to be on the site.

## SOLUTION

The new works might instead have been an addition to the existing structure but the architects, who have written widely on the palimpsestic tradition in Irish architecture, rejected this approach in favour of protecting the special interest of the structure. This meant retaining the building's status as a generic urban monument in the town and, in opposition to the zeitgeist with its rejection of the emotional baggage of Ireland's clerical past, embracing St Maur's brute monumentality of form and hardness of external finishes. So, although the church had originally been rendered externally, this earlier alteration was also respected and retained. The only changes to the external appearance of the structure are in the form of small clues to the transformation: a glowing lantern perched on top of the belfry and a sculptural piece of signage (a metal book) on one gable, replacing a missing finial cross. The roof was repaired using natural slates, the Gothic ceiling carefully cleaned down, the surviving monuments pieced together, windows reledged, the typical woodgrained doors and lobbies conserved, the value of



ordinary elements of religious life taken as valuable in themselves. The architects call this exercising 'an absence of excluding judgement', an attitude that was key to retaining the character of the place they found.

The interior was painted white on a lime plaster base, luminous, a ghost of itself, with a few, carefully selected, small sections left bare to expose the underlying material. The extensive ceiling void was filled with plant and

insulation, the ground floor with cabling and heating services but the walls were left alone. Archaeology revealed the plan of the Penal church beneath the 19th-century floor. The old walls were incorporated into the project, visible through glass in the floor near the entrance. The cruciform plan was re-utilised as an armature for the new. The west door remained as the library entrance; the chancel, stripped to its brickwork core, made a colourful found space for art at the natural focus of the building; and secondary functions were located in a network of side chapels and sacristies. A confessional cubicle became a booth in which to listen to music. Like a giant piece of walnut furniture, playing on memories of galleries in Penal chapels, the library swells to fill the nave but doesn't impinge on the crossing space, which remains open for collective use.

- [1] The project involved a layered response; respecting and conserving the original fabric and making new interventions to form spaces that allowed the church function as a library
- [2] Old and new are both cherished equally and gain by their proximity with existing elements overlaid rather than obliterated
- [3] The only changes to the external appearance of the structure are in the form of small clues to the transformation: a glowing lantern perched on top of the belfry and a sculptural piece of signage on one gable

## LESSONS

The project involved a layered response, firstly by respecting and conserving the existing fabric, secondly by harnessing the 'sense' of the existing architecture and thirdly by making an intervention that formed spaces allowing a library to function, to be completed by books, furniture and people. Old and new are both cherished equally and gain by their proximity, with existing elements overlaid rather than obliterated. This work is about making ordinary public buildings in small communities, but it contains the possibility of fresh architectural expression that can be particular, often in small ways, and yet make an honourable pact with the past.

[2]



[3]





## Adaptive Reuse

### WATERFORD HEALTH PARK

#### PROJECT TEAM:

DHB ARCHITECTS

FRANK FOX AND ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTANT ENGINEERS

LAWLOR AND PARTNERS  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

RAMSAY COX ASSOCIATES

SHERIDAN AND ASSOCIATES  
FIRE SAFETY CONSULTANTS

MILIA TSAOUSSIS-MADDOCK  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

#### CLIENT:

DR. MARK + MRS EDEL ROWE /  
THE ROWE-CREAVIN PRACTICE

#### DATE:

2007-2009

#### CONTEXT

The Presentation Convent, Waterford, was designed by A.W.N. Pugin. It is an austere building of great architectural clarity and was very closely based on his ideal monastery plan as proclaimed in his 'True Principles'.

Originally located in a rural environment about two kilometres from the city centre, it is now surrounded by suburban development and a complex of primary and secondary school buildings. The site was divided up after its sale by the Presentation Order in 2005. The still-undeveloped land on the western side was acquired by Waterford City Council. The remainder, on which the convent building sits, includes sufficient amounts of area to the west and south so that the original setting can still be appreciated. The current urban context includes the adjoining old school building, now solicitors' offices, and a functioning primary school from the 1940s. Opposite is the rear of the stand to Walsh Park, the local GAA grounds.

The building is a protected structure with a rating of national importance. The local authority's planning and conservation officers were closely involved at the early design and planning stages, as were the heritage advisory services of the then Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

[1]



**CHALLENGE**

The brief called for a range of community medical facilities around the anchor tenancies of a GP practice and a pharmacy. It was very important that the practice's local client-base would be happy to move to the new premises, so much effort was focused on creating an attractive social space for wellbeing. The restoration of the beautiful and important chapel with its intact roof screen was also a priority.

The foremost challenge in this type of project always relates to the inherent contradiction in trying to transform something which has a very pronounced character

without adversely affecting that character. Another challenge was the transformation of a closed, monastic building into an open, public one. This included the need to have a clear internal organisational and spatial sequence, and the need to open up to the street and to the surrounding community. Onto the original layer of meaning is added a new layer in response to the building's changed status. It is no longer a convent and school, it is now a community health facility. Only the minimum amount of fabric was removed in order to make the new organisational layout clear and intelligible and many different options were considered as to how best to reuse this historic fabric in a transformative way.

**SOLUTION**

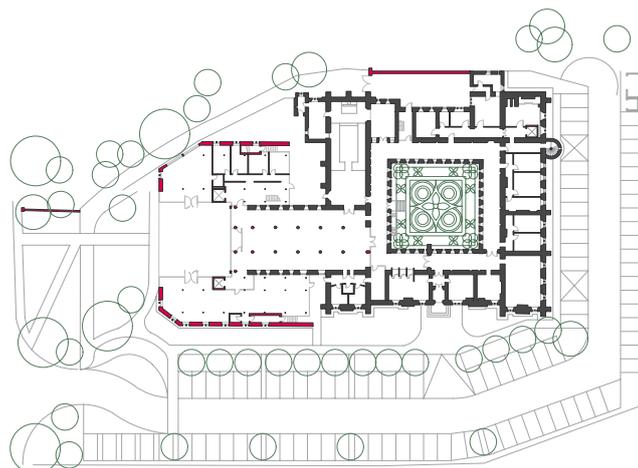
Only minimal changes were made to the internal fabric of the convent, and most of these are reversible. Great care was taken to ensure that the additions did not encroach on the important views of the western façade, one of Pugin's finest and most sophisticated, so that the building can still be understood in its traditional context. This was possible because of a clear separation between the types of use which the existing building could accommodate. The consultation rooms were

located in the 'cellular' layout of the existing, while new structures, the two new wings, accommodate the more heavily serviced areas of 'non-compatible' uses such as the physiotherapy room and the pharmacy.

The main physical changes to the existing building involved taking down the already-altered gable to form a new reception space; breaking through the end wall to link it to the cloister, and the insertion of a new stairs off the cloister for fire safety. This new entrance axis also extends out as far as the Slievekeale Road, linking the Health Park to the main route into the city and the surrounding residential areas, and supports the principle that all new access should be open and transparent. The reception space becomes the hub from which access to the pharmacy, the emergency GP service or the consultation rooms via the cloister reception is handled. All of these services are visible at point of entry. The area to the front of the building, where most of these changes took place is the location for the new wings forming the urban set-piece to the public domain.

Removed fabric such as the masonry of the gable to St Mary's was reused as the cladding material for the new wings, but in a way that maximised the quantities (each stone was cut

[2]



An open, collaborative approach in the early stages, particularly with the planning and conservation services of Waterford City Council and the then DOEHLG was one of the keys to the project's success.

[3]

in half thus doubling the amount of stone available) while marking the transformative process of this reuse. The cut-face of each stone was used as the finished side so that difference of texture – for the same material – became an important element in the appreciation of old and new. Almost all of this material was reused on site.

## LESSONS

The opportunities presented by the building itself were used to emphasise craft as a way of making a creative link to the past, by 'summoning up the spirit of the dead workman' to paraphrase John Ruskin. The introduction of craft into the design process became central to the tender and site stages and allowed greater flexibility when dealing with issues arising on site. Architects, especially in the conservation context, must take on the mantle of the promoters and guardians of craft, requiring them to work more closely with contractors and tradespersons at detailed design stage and during the construction process.



- [1] Only minimal changes were made to the internal fabric of the convent, and most of these are reversible
- [2] Great care was taken to ensure that the additions did not encroach on the important views of the western façade, one of Pugin's finest and most sophisticated, so that the building can still be understood in its traditional context
- [3] Removed fabric such as the masonry of the gable to St. Mary's was reused as the cladding material for the new wings
- [4] A major challenge was that of transforming a closed monastic building into an open public one with connections to the street and the surrounding community



[4]



## Adaptive Reuse

### ARCHITECT'S STUDIO, PEARSE STREET

#### PROJECT TEAM:

HENRY J. LYONS ARCHITECTS

BRUCE SHAW  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT LTD.

ARUP CONSULTING ENGINEERS

VMRA CONSULTING ENGINEERS

ARTHUR GIBNEY

LINDSAY  
CONSERVATION ARCHITECTS

FEAC FIRE SAFETY CONSULTANTS

BILLINGS DESIGN ASSOCIATES LTD.

#### CLIENT:

MAGENNIS PROPERTY LTD.

#### DATE:

2009

#### CONTEXT

51-54 Pearse Street accommodates the new design studios of Henry J. Lyons Architects within a new six storey building on a tight urban site which previously housed Healy & Sons metal workshop and foundry.

The brief was to provide generous studio space to house the expanded practice and additional support facilities in a building which would promote collaboration and dialogue. The key objectives were provision of light, space and communication between occupants in an environmentally responsive building. These parameters led to the development of a building where drawing studios, meeting rooms and social spaces are organised around a modest but distinctive atrium designed to be the heart of the building, but which also plays a vital role in the building's sustainability strategy. The building has been designed to achieve an A3 BER rating and a BREEAM Very Good rating.

#### CHALLENGE

The development involved extensive refurbishment works to the protected structures, built in a neo classical style c.1840 to accommodate a house, workshop and offices. The buildings were adapted and altered over the years and an extensive stucco base and entablature were applied to unify the three buildings in c.1899. Significant parts of the front and rear façades were rendered in the mid-twentieth century obscuring the legibility of the terrace. Internally the accommodation was set out as cellular offices to the street with ancillary spaces to the rear. The front rooms have varying degrees of quality ranging from highly ornate and exotic applied stucco in the first floor boardrooms, to very plain and utilitarian rooms on the second floor. The protected structures are distinctive in terms of being a surviving example of a business premises typical of this street and surrounding areas.

[1]



[2]



## SOLUTION

The design fully utilises the existing entrances, cellular offices and circulation ways of the protected structures and integrates them with a new contemporary building, with five large drawing studios located to the rear. Externally, the new design promotes the visual unity of the protected structures, contributing to

the regeneration of the streetscape while giving expression to the new building to the rear.

The existing distinctive entrance archway is used as the main entrance to the building, leading directly to the new four storey atrium. A secondary entrance is provided to the west of the protected structures. The atrium, which is traversed by light steel and timber bridges, is the central

organisational feature allowing for an ease of communication between all levels and in particular between the old building and the new extension. The atrium, with its distinctive limewashed 'rear' façade allows the character of the nineteenth century buildings to permeate and influence the character of the new structure to the rear. New lifts, stairs, vertical risers, sanitary facilities and service area are provided in the new fabric allowing for a minimal level of invasive work in the original buildings.

A new façade is composed of the refurbished protected structures and a modest new 5.5 metre infill section to the west matching both the existing parapet in height and the rhythm of the street in width. The new infill section, with its polished stone louvres installed over a fully glazed façade, was designed to offer a glimpse of the contemporary structure and activity to the rear and provide transition in scale to the larger adjoining building.

The façades of the existing buildings have been refurbished by removing the non-original cementitious render to No. 51 and re-pointing

The development integrates a terrace of three mid-nineteenth century protected structures with a contemporary extension formed about a new atrium, providing clear articulation between the existing and new fabric.

[3]



and repairing the brickwork which was uncovered beneath. Original sliding sash windows, doors, railings, granite cills and other features were carefully repaired and refurbished. The north, rear façade of the new build is totally glazed bringing even light to the drawing studios. This facade is an active element of the building's natural ventilation system with automated opening sections allowing for controlled heating / cooling and ventilation. The air drawn in through the facade is expelled through high level openings in the glazed roof of the atrium which has openable side sections creating a 'stack effect' regulating air quality and temperature changes.

### LESSONS

The level of invasive work in the original buildings was minimised by organising the accommodation to make best use of their existing layout.

The old and the new are equally balanced and sit comfortably next to each other, linked across the central atrium which provides clear articulation between the refurbished protected structures and the modern studios, while bringing light and ventilation into the heart of the building. The use of a simple restrained materials palette including boardmarked concrete, oak and MDF joinery, steel balustrades and sliding screens complement existing masonry walls, painted joinery and lime render of the original buildings.

[4]



[1] The old and the new are equally balanced and sit comfortably next to each other, linked across the central atrium which provides clear articulation between the refurbished protected structures and the modern studios

[2] The atrium, with its distinctive limewashed 'rear' façade allows the character of the nineteenth century buildings to permeate and influence the character of the new structure to the rear.

[3] The façades of the existing buildings have been refurbished by removing the non-original cementitious render to No. 51 and re-pointing and repairing the brickwork which was uncovered beneath

[4] The existing front rooms have varying degrees of quality ranging from highly ornate and exotic applied stucco in the first floor boardrooms, to very plain and utilitarian rooms on the second floor

[5] The design utilises the existing protected structures and integrates them with a new contemporary building, with five large drawing studios located to the rear

[5]





The project demonstrates how the existing urban housing stock can be reinvented and adapted through innovative architectural design in order to sustain changing lives and communities in our inner cities.

## Adaptive Reuse

### BACK YARD, JOHN DILLON STREET, DUBLIN

#### PROJECT TEAM:

BOYD CODY ARCHITECTS

CASEY O'ROURKE ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

#### CLIENT:

PRIVATE

#### DATE:

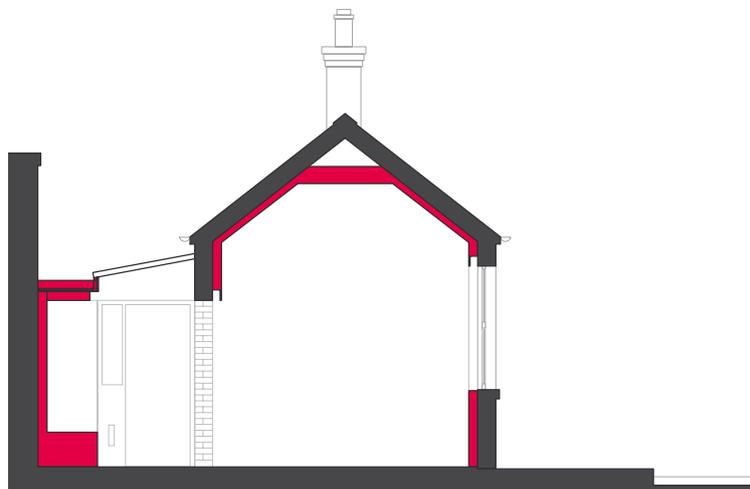
2010-2011

#### CONTEXT

No. 58 is situated at the corner of John Dillon Street and Hanover Lane, part of a terrace of four single storey artisan dwellings constructed between 1899 and 1904 in the Liberties area of Dublin's inner city. Originally, three roomed, its architecture is simple in design. The house is constructed in brick with a rendered rear façade. A flat roofed addition was constructed in the 1970s, which contained a kitchen and bathroom. This addition occupied most of the back yard. The house was seriously dilapidated needing complete upgrading and refurbishment.

#### CHALLENGE

To conserve the urban fabric and the character of the street, the volumetric integrity of the existing house was to be retained. Internally however the dimensions were very restrictive – the area of the existing house was only 30m<sup>2</sup> – and there was a need to increase the size and arrangement of its rooms.



[1]



## SOLUTION

As the simple, long and narrow form of the house was liked, it was decided to step out of the existing plan to re-create the *back yard* and use it as internal space. A series of large rooflights provide an uninterrupted view of the sky and flood this space with natural light giving the occupant the perception that he/she is outside. This new *back yard* contains the dining area, kitchen and bathroom. Each of these rooms is divided from the next by satin anodised aluminium clad doors and screens. The house is entered through one of these via a new front entrance, off Hanover Lane.

The main services for the house are held in a long black box which is placed in the yard. Finished in Formica and powder coated aluminium, it accommodates banquette seating, kitchen units, the bath, the bin store and boiler ultimately forming part of the new modern façade on to Hanover Lane. It is also the main source of artificial light in the house.

The floor and walls of the new *back yard* are finished in terrazzo with aggregates chosen to match the granite cills of the existing house. Mirrors have been used in various locations to further extend and expand the occupants' perception of space.

The footprint of the existing house contains the living area, the master bedroom and a second bedroom or study. All storage is integrated through thickening the walls with wardrobes. A large chimney-breast was removed to provide more floor area but the existing chimney was retained and supported above the ceiling line with provision for its future use with a gas stove. The insulation,

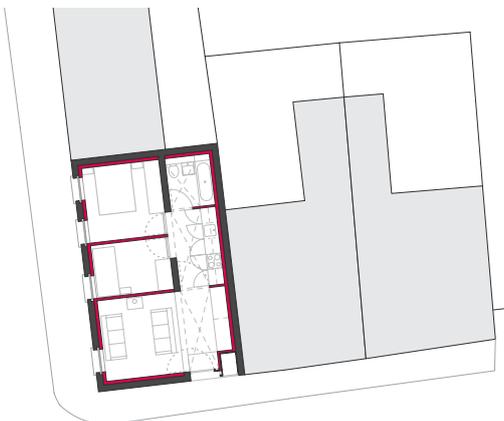
This project attempts to make the ordinary extraordinary, adapting a small artisan dwelling of the nineteenth century into a light-filled contemporary home.

blinds, mechanical and electrical servicing to these rooms are held within a new thick internal white plasterboard lining to the house.

### LESSONS

This project attempts to make the ordinary extraordinary, adapting a small artisan dwelling of the nineteenth century into a light-filled contemporary home. Conservation and adaptation of the existing housing stock can be inventive and exciting. As architects, we must use the architecture of the past, understand it, play with it, build in it and on to it, using the most up to date design and technologies so as to re-invent it for modern life. We must also however recognise and respect its inherent qualities. If we do, we can link both so they complement each other and work together to make a new architecture of inherent reciprocity and quality.

[3]



[2]



- [1] A series of large rooflights provide an uninterrupted view of the sky and flood this space with natural light giving the occupant the perception that he/she is outside
- [2] To conserve the urban fabric and the character of the street, the volumetric integrity of the existing house was to be retained
- [3] The new extension is 'stepped out' to the rear of the long, narrow form of the existing plan
- [4] Architect's drawing showing the 'layering' of the existing and new elements working together to make a new architecture

[4]





## Adaptive Reuse

### DUBLIN DENTAL HOSPITAL

#### PROJECT TEAM:

ARCHITECTS – MCCULLOUGH  
MULVIN ARCHITECTS

BRENDAN MERRY & PARTNERS  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

O'CONNOR SUTTON CRONIN  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

HOMAN O'BRIEN ASSOCIATES

#### CLIENT:

BOARD OF DUBLIN DENTAL HOSPITAL

#### DATE:

2007-2010

#### CONTEXT

The project took on five contiguous houses in central Dublin and converted them as offices, seminar rooms and rooftop library for the Dublin Dental Hospital. The five buildings were protected structures under the *Dublin City Council Development Plan*. Four were essentially Georgian with later street facades; one was a five bay Victorian shop with residential accommodation overhead – all had undergone significant change and adjustment through their lives with a mix of period and later detail. While they retained a typical arrangement of plans separated by spine walls, there were already some horizontal linkages between them. The buildings were typical of 'ordinary' Dublin houses within the canal ring. One house (No. 2) had a bowed rear elevation, more significant decoration and a staircase set centrally in the plan.

#### CHALLENGE

Technically, the five houses had many of the problems associated with structures of their age, the result of poor maintenance and adhoc alterations; windows were in poor repair, floorboards missing, altered fireplaces, outbreaks of wet and dry rot. In addition, the buildings were available from first floor up only, there was no main entry at ground level; other uses and tenants occupied these spaces. Developing the project was an interesting urban challenge, with the availability of site access to the rear a valuable asset. The brief, and the planning process, required the buildings to be restored carefully; the function required the buildings to be linked horizontally, a characteristic already evident in the other Dental Hospital buildings on Lincoln Place.

The brief required the buildings to be restored carefully. The function required them to be linked horizontally.

[1]



### SOLUTION

The houses were upgraded to modern standards of fire safety, insulation and accessibility by very careful work on the fabric, using all means to address deficiencies without damaging older materials, spaces or finishes. The architects had extended discussions with the client body to develop a working functional model for the houses; the structure was explored to see its potential to support additional accommodation. The approach was a combination of careful conservation with strong modern intervention into the fabric.

The five terraced houses – a piece of city, archaeology and typology combined, were upgraded, using voids and fireplaces for services and retaining doors and older materials and surfaces where possible. Walls were stripped of more modern plaster and paper, in some places the historic plasterwork was exposed revealing colours of another era – panels of this uncovered plasterwork have been left as a litmus strip in each room to indicate a timeline. In one location the layering of brickwork with timbers

and new concrete pad footing has been left exposed to tell the story, a modern-day archaeology. Found elements such as timber cladding have been reused in the rooms where they were discovered to create a modern view on the timber paneled room. A timber-lined corridor was cut through the fabric on three levels, with voids connecting it up and down to other floors.

The rooftop was transformed by the addition of dramatic new 'pods' overlooking Trinity College containing a library and art display spaces. The overall structural principle relies on the five structures to support the roof-top pods. Their strong cross walls form the foundations for the light steel structure, the load is pinned and embedded in the existing structure, transferring through the excluded ground floor. Steels are inserted strategically and buried within floors; concrete pads are carefully embedded into walls. Where chimneys are braced, the bolted steel plates are exposed. In the same way the robustness and strength of the five structures allows for the weight of this level of radical conservation and

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[3]

intervention. They retain their integrity to the front; the cantilevered pods form a new layer of quasi-industrial landscape to the rear still echoing the increment of the five bays. The buildings as a composite are sufficiently big-boned to support an alternative reading, from front to back.

## LESSONS

The lessons of the Dental Hospital project included: a realisation through exploration of the potential bearing capacity and strength of ordinary Georgian terrace houses in the context of close and careful structural analysis; the delivery of unique environments and spaces made possible by a careful juxtaposition of old and new work; the value of a close liaison between client and architect in the development of unusual structures; the absolute necessity of close working with sympathetic and informed Planning and Fire department personnel.

- [1] A timber-lined corridor was cut through the fabric on three levels, with voids connecting it up and down to other floors
- [2] The rooftop was transformed by the addition of dramatic new 'pods' overlooking Trinity College containing a library and art display spaces
- [3] The brief, and the planning process, required the buildings to be restored carefully while the function required the buildings to be linked horizontally
- [4] Technically, the five houses had many of the problems associated with structures of their age, the result of poor maintenance and adhoc alterations
- [5] The architects' approach was a combination of careful conservation with strong contemporary interventions into the existing fabric



[4]

[5]





## Adaptive Reuse

### THE MILK MARKET, LIMERICK

#### PROJECT TEAM:

HEALY PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

DENNANY REIDY ASSOCIATES  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

EDWARD COTTER PARTNERSHIP  
QUANTITY SURVEYORS

DON O'MALLEY AND PARTNERS

#### CLIENT:

LIMERICK MARKET TRUSTEES

#### DATE:

2010

#### CONTEXT

The Milk Market, constructed in the 1830s by the Pery family, is located on the old city wall at Mungret Gate in Irishtown. Markets in this area of the city are shown to be established in the 1790's, including the Hay Market, Pig Market, Linen Hall, Butter Market, Cornmarket and Milk Market.

This market district required reorganisation and a management structure which led to the Limerick Market Trustees (LMT) being established by an Act of Parliament in 1852. Although initially successful, they entered examinership in 1898 and markets began to fail one by one until only the Milk Market survived. It continued up to the 1960's but the building fabric fell into disrepair and eventually ruin.

In 1988, the LMT emerged from examinership and a process of refurbishment of the courtyard and buildings began. A major restoration project was completed in 1993 under the direction of Murray O'Laoire Architects and a Saturday morning market was re-established with the courtyard operating as a surface car park during the week, generating an income that was to substantially finance the next phase of the project.

#### CHALLENGE

In 2007 the Trustees engaged in a process to see how the markets could further develop. Their objective was to broaden what was offered at the Milk Market. Their key idea was for 'ready to eat' high quality food stalls extending a visit from a brief market shop to a social experience.

It was also recognised that the development could serve as a catalyst for regeneration of this neglected quarter of the city. The design solution had to be functional, economic and iconic relative to the scale of Limerick. The market also had to be all-weather and open.

There were a number of constraints to be considered as part of the architectural solution. Firstly the Milk Market buildings are protected structures and secondly the site contains the remains of the old city wall, a national monument.

It was recognised that the development could serve as a catalyst for regeneration of this neglected quarter of the city.

[1]



## SOLUTION

The design solution was a large twenty four metre high 'umbrella' over the courtyard, a strong vertical intervention which would also define the market location on both the skyline and the main approach routes from the retail core of the city.

The design has delivered a modern intervention using simple detailing, achieving an appropriate contrast to the detail of the market buildings. The main element, a tensile structure, is carried by an eccentrically aligned mast which maximises the cover of the courtyard as well as accommodating a pavilion building, while respecting the scale of the original two storey building. The four corners of the tensile

structure are supported by inclined struts, suspended and stabilised by two tension ties per strut. The membrane is stressed between the steel heading suspended by steel cables from the central mast and four catenary cables spanning approximately forty-five meters from one corner to the other.

All vehicles have been removed from the courtyard during trading, with traffic only permitted during stall set up and closing. The new traffic circulation is defined by granite cobbles running between the two gates serving the courtyard. Granite cobbles are also used to delineate the line of the city wall. The remaining courtyard surface is a polished

concrete using varied aggregate and green glass providing a quality and durable finish.

Five permanent units, offering food and beverages, are accommodated in the single storey pavilion with an eating and exhibition area on a mezzanine overhead. When closed, the pavilion reads as a timber box within the courtyard. The remaining areas are laid out to accommodate up to fifty-two trading stalls, an overall increase of twenty-one stalls from the original market.

## LESSONS

Since the interventions, customer numbers have doubled and the market has extended its opening times. It also accommodates monthly art and craft markets, a Christmas market as well as events and concerts. During these events, the food traders also operate. It has provided the city with a venue that can support outdoor events irrespective of the weather and its success should also act as a stimulus for further urban regeneration of this important part of the city.

[1] The tensile structure is carried by an eccentrically aligned mast which maximises the cover of the courtyard as well as accommodating a pavilion building

[2] The design solution was a large 'umbrella' over the courtyard to define the market location on the skyline

[3] Since the interventions, customer numbers have doubled and the market has extended its opening times

[4] Floor plan: the enclosed courtyard contains a timber-clad pavilion with an eating and exhibition space on its roof

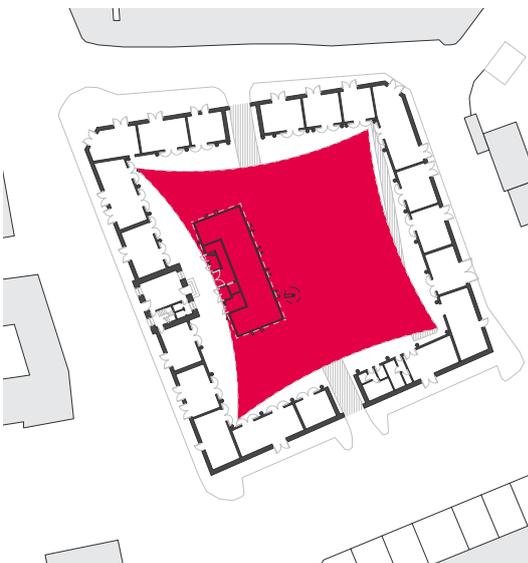
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[www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie)

# PRACTICE PROFILES

## ÁIT

Based in Dublin, Áit is an urbanism and landscape design practice with over twelve years experience on a wide spectrum of projects; from master planning new urban neighbourhoods, transport interchanges and industrial lands to overseeing the implementation of hard and soft landscape works on a variety of projects. Principal Daibhí Mac Domhnaill has taught on the landscape architecture programme at University College Dublin and has written for and edited Landscape Ireland.

[www.ait-place.ie](http://www.ait-place.ie)

## BOX ARCHITECTURE

Since conception in 1997, the company has been established as a leading design practice, having won eleven Irish National Awards to date. Quality has remained the focus of Box throughout and this has been employed to a variety of projects including urban schemes, apartment units, award-winning private commissions, corporate offices, creches and housing developments. The success of Box Architecture is achieved through a personal approach to understanding client needs. With a hands-on approach, technical expertise, creative execution and a commitment to continued education, the company applies a philosophy of the highest principle in order to contribute to a sustainable future and maintain quality architecture.

[www.box.ie](http://www.box.ie)

## BOYD CODY ARCHITECTS

Boyd Cody Architects is a design-led practice which began as a partnership formed in 1997 in New York. The two directors, Dermot Boyd and Peter Cody studied together and graduated from the Dublin Institute of Technology in 1990. In the intervening period they both spent a number of years in Europe and the United States gaining valuable academic and professional experience before returning to Ireland. Their shared vision and interest in contemporary architectural and urban culture is the principal motivating force behind the practice. Each project is viewed as a means to explore and realise architecture's full design and urban potential.

[www.boydcodyarch.com](http://www.boydcodyarch.com)

## DE BLACAM + MEAGHER

de Blacam and Meagher has established a pre-eminent position in architecture in Europe. It is enthusiastically dedicated to service of clients and to completion of buildings of major significance. The practice is primarily concerned with the making of simple buildings and with the employment of beautiful materials to give quality, permanence and significance to the work. As well as the design of excellent new buildings, the practice possesses particular expertise in restoration and conservation work, interior, furniture design and exhibition design.

[www.deblacamandmeagher.com](http://www.deblacamandmeagher.com)

## DENIS BYRNE ARCHITECTS

Formed in 1998, Denis Byrne Architects is a Dublin-based design practice specialising in the production of contemporary works of architecture and related disciplines. The practice's work may be seen throughout Ireland on both urban and rural award-winning construction projects, from the 'House in the Field' in Co Westmeath to the 'Cigar Box' apartments and offices, in central Dublin. Since the formation of the practice, the scope of projects has broadened considerably to include master planning, landscape design, urban design, furniture and interior design, all pursued within the parameters of larger environmental and social concerns.

[www.denisbyrnearchitects.ie](http://www.denisbyrnearchitects.ie)

## DHB ARCHITECTS

dhbArchitects is a design-driven architectural practice based in Waterford city. Its directors, Fintan Duffy, Máire Henry and Harry Bent have extensive experience in Ireland, France and Finland having worked with world-renowned practices such as Juhani Pallasmaa, Renzo Piano Building Workshop and Marcel Breuer Associates, in nearly every sphere of architectural design and practice. Project experience includes high-density residential, cultural buildings, sustainable housing, community projects and healthcare. Since its inception in 2004, the practice has been developing a reputation for high-quality interventions in conservation contexts. Its work has been recognised both in Ireland and internationally.

[www.dhbarchitects.ie](http://www.dhbarchitects.ie)

### **DONAGHY AND DIMOND ARCHITECTS**

Founded in Dublin's Liberties by Will Dimond and Marcus Donaghy in 2001, the practice is dedicated to making robust, enduring and sustainable buildings. Over the past decade, Donaghy and Dimond have won several AAI and RIAI Awards and published widely. Both principals are part-time lecturers in UCD's School of Architecture. The practice is built on knowledge and experience: of sustainable practice; hands-on construction; continuing education; design research; and apprenticeships served in practices committed to excellence in architecture. The practice has particular skills in conservation, energy upgrades and passive house design and was nominated for the BSI International Architecture Award for environmentally sustainable practice in 2012.

[www.donaghydimond.ie](http://www.donaghydimond.ie)

### **DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL**

Dublin City Council is committed to using design to improve the attractiveness, liveability and sustainability of our built environment in its roles as planning authority, manager of public spaces and buildings and through its own construction projects. Dublin City Architects is responsible for promoting design and providing architectural, urban and conservation design services to Dublin City Council. The office designs and commissions a wide range of construction projects and aims to achieve the highest standards for the people who use our buildings. The quality of the work produced

can be seen in the range of awards which many of these schemes have received.

[www.dublincity.ie](http://www.dublincity.ie)

### **FKL ARCHITECTS**

FKL Architects, established in 1998 by Michelle Fagan, Paul Kelly and Gary Lysaght, is committed to practice-based research, environmentally aware design and the application of abstract ideas to built form. The practice's experience covers an extensive range of project types from private to public and domestic to commercial. This diversity of projects, from small scale to master planning, enables a tandem focus on detail and strategy. FKL conceived, curated and designed the Irish entry for the 2006 Venice Biennale, SubUrban to SuperRural, on the issue of sprawl.

[www.fklarchitects.com](http://www.fklarchitects.com)

### **GROUP 91**

In the autumn of 1991, Group 91 Architects won the Temple Bar Framework Plan competition and were awarded the commission of making new public spaces and surrounding buildings as proposed in their competition entry. Within Group 91, there were eight practices and thirteen architects: Shay Cleary, Yvonne Farrell, John Tuomey, Sheila O'Donnell, Paul Keogh, Rachael Chidlow, Niall McCullough, Shelley McNamara, Michael McGarry, Siobhan Ní Eanaigh, Shane O'Toole, Valerie Mulvin and Derek Tynan.

### **HEALY PARTNERS ARCHITECTS**

Healy Partners Architects is based in Limerick City and was established in 1989. Its early years focused on forging a reputation for good design being delivered effectively and economically to smaller projects. This approach has allowed the practice to grow in both the scale of the commissions and in the studio team who work to produce innovative and effective design solutions. The practice has won numerous local and national awards including five Irish Architecture Awards. It has developed considerable expertise in a wide range of building types including residential, offices, office interiors and fit out, retail, education, healthcare, leisure and tourism, religious and commercial projects for a diverse range of clients both public and private.

[www.healypartners.com](http://www.healypartners.com)

### **HENRY J. LYONS ARCHITECTS**

Established over 90 years ago, Henry J. Lyons Architects is a design-led practice committed to the pursuit of excellence in design and to the realisation of building projects that respond creatively to social, community and environmental needs. Core services include architecture, interior design and fit out, master planning and conservation. Henry J. Lyons received a number of prestigious design awards including the RIAI Best Commercial Building Award 2010, The RIAI Public Choice Award 2010 and the RIAI Accessibility Award. The practice has offices in Dublin and Cork and has partnerships in China, London and the UAE.

[www.hjlyons.com](http://www.hjlyons.com)

### **JACK COUGHLAN ASSOCIATES**

Jack Coughlan Associates is composed of two interactive disciplines. The first is an architectural practice producing contemporary designs and the second a specialist conservation section. There is a degree of crossover which helps both sections to work together where both disciplines are required. The combination of both roles is becoming the direction in which the practice has been moving, as contemporary interventions based on a full understanding of existing historic buildings and structures can be undertaken with confidence. Award-winning projects include the Conservation and Conversion of the Old City Waterworks to a Museum and Exhibition Area for Cork City Council and the Fenn's Quay project, also in Cork.

[www.jca.ie](http://www.jca.ie)

### **COADY PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTS**

Coady Partnership Architects is a design-driven practice, specialising in workspace, housing, education and healthcare buildings. Core skills are masterplanning, urban design, building design and building conservation. CPA bring creativity and imagination to every project through client liaison, exploitation of opportunities offered by site and site, and intense collaboration with the project team – all focused on design excellence.

[www.coady.ie](http://www.coady.ie)

### **JOHN THOMPSON & PARTNERS**

John Thompson & Partners is an international placemaking practice, with extensive experience of delivering successful projects for both public and private sectors throughout the UK, Europe, China, Russia and the Middle East. The practice uses participatory techniques pioneered and honed over two decades to build collaborative visions for projects with the very people who will go on to use them. With studios in London, Edinburgh, Shanghai and Berlin the practice undertakes placemaking projects at every scale, from cities and towns, to neighbourhoods, streets, and the design of individual buildings.

[www.jtp.co.uk](http://www.jtp.co.uk)

### **LOCI**

Loci is an urban design, planning and architecture practice with extensive experience in the areas of environmental planning, policy and practice. The practice emphasises a multi-disciplinary approach in the formulation and development of best practice guidelines and spatial policy and has provided formal guidance to key stakeholders in the public and private sectors since 2003. The principles of Responsive Urbanism are utilised to develop frameworks for re-structuring existing urban areas that are in need of regeneration, as well as new sustainable places. Loci also plays an ongoing role in teaching urban design at third level and through tailored lectures and seminars for professionals working in the field of urbanism.

[www.loci.ie](http://www.loci.ie)

### **LOCUM CONSULTING / COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL**

Locum is a specialist destination development and management service provided by Colliers International. Colliers is a destination consultancy, dedicated to developing and promoting the art and science of destination making and providing leading-edge strategic, operational, financial and planning advice to the destination sector. Informed by research, international best practice and experience, the firm offers services at every stage of the project lifecycle – from defining the vision, objectives, concept and product mix; through location assessment, market forecasts, business planning, options appraisal and feasibility; to investor and operator procurement, management, marketing and destination branding.

[www.locumconsulting.com](http://www.locumconsulting.com)

### **MAGEE CREEDON KEARNS**

Magee Creedon Kearns Architects was established in 1993. Over twenty years the practice has designed and delivered a broad range of building types in the areas of new build, refurbishment, reuse and conservation. These projects both for the private and public sector, include mixed use inner city infill sites, housing, crèches, schools, resource centres, office workshops, medical clinics, sports facilities as well as the Island Crematorium in Cork Harbour. The practice has built a reputation of bringing innovation to its design solutions, surpassing client expectations, while maintaining an architectural clarity and quality attracting numerous awards and commendations. Presently the

practice is engaged in amalgamating an 18th century Meeting House with the English Market in Cork City centre.

[www.mageecreedonkearns.com](http://www.mageecreedonkearns.com)

### **MARGARET QUINLAN ARCHITECTS**

Margaret Quinlan Architects was established in 1985. In addition to designing contemporary buildings, the practice has developed specialised building conservation expertise since the 1990's. Margaret holds RIAI Grade 1 Accreditation in Conservation and the practice also holds Grade 1 Practice Accreditation. Projects have ranged from the preparation of conservation plans, repair and restoration of important medieval and later monuments for public bodies and private clients to the sensitive adaptation of old buildings. Contemporary interventions in historic buildings is a particular interest. The practice, which also acts on a consultancy basis to other architectural practices, is based in Dublin and in the Clonmel area of the south-east.

### **MCCULLOUGH MULVIN ARCHITECTS**

McCullough Mulvin Architects is a design- based practice based in Dublin. They have worked on cultural and civic buildings, libraries, schools and in healthcare throughout Ireland, working to define a new public realm in a changing society, designing projects from the ground or making radical and innovative contemporary interventions into existing contexts. Previous projects include the Ussher Library and The Long Room Hub in

Trinity College, Waterford City Library, Bessboro Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Hospital in Cork. Recent work such as the Dublin Dental Hospital in Nassau Street challenges perceived ideas about how the city should develop and grow. The work of McCullough Mulvin Architects is extended by publication, teaching and research in Ireland, the USA and Europe.

[www.mcculloughmulvin.com](http://www.mcculloughmulvin.com)

### **MCKEVITT ARCHITECTS**

McKevitt Architects has been established in Drogheda, Co. Louth for over 35 years. In that time the practice has built up expertise and experience in a wide range of buildings and building types ranging from small domestic to large scale commercial, industrial, residential and educational. Great attention is paid to all the necessary steps in delivering a complete and successful project; from the initial conceptualisation, through the planning and procurement process, construction, and final certification.

[www.mckevittarchitects.ie](http://www.mckevittarchitects.ie)

### **MICHAEL COLLINS ASSOCIATES**

Established in 1988, Michael Collins Associates is an architectural practice providing a full range of architectural, interior design, master planning and project management services. MCA is involved in a wide range of projects, principally in the area of urban renewal, commercial, residential, educational, healthcare, leisure and buildings for the bloodstock industry. Aware that architecture cannot stand

still but must respond to the changing needs of man in his environment, MCA's design philosophy accommodates change and development and is based on sound analysis of functional requirements and a desire to understand the client's needs.

[www.mca.ie](http://www.mca.ie)

### **MITCHELL + ASSOCIATES**

Mitchell + Associates is a multidisciplinary design practice incorporating Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, Architecture and Environmental Impact Assessment at its core. The practice was founded in 1988 and over the last 20 years has established itself as a leading design practice. With this multi-disciplinary approach to design issues, the practice develops coherent, integrated design strategies for projects in a broad range of urban, rural and natural contexts bringing a depth of understanding and expertise in issues that determine environmental, economic and social sustainability to all projects.

[www.mitchell.ie](http://www.mitchell.ie)

### **NATIONAL BUILDING AGENCY**

Established by Government as a Semi-State body in 1960, the National Building Agency was a multi-disciplinary, professional design and construction consultancy practice providing services to both public and private sector clients. It undertook specific tasks in support of varying policies of Government in housing, urban renewal, and other construction

related activities. It also undertook projects on an entirely commercial basis either on its own or on a joint venture basis with local authorities or/ and private developers. As part of the amalgamation of a number of State Housing Agencies the operational activities of the National Building Agency have transferred to the Housing Agency.

[www.nba.ie](http://www.nba.ie)

#### **O'BRIAIN BEARY ARCHITECTS**

Based in Dublin, O'Briain Beary Architects was established in 2000. The practice focuses on public buildings and healthcare projects, with completed projects in recent years including the new Garda Station at Leixlip, refurbishment of the Entrance Hall and Offices at Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Hall, and five diagnostic clinics for Euromedic. Projects under construction include the new Acute Psychiatric Unit in Beaumont Hospital, St. Joseph's Day Hospital, Raheny and Stonebridge Resource Centre, Shankill. Michael Beary is a member of the RIAI Exam Board and lectures in the RIAI Professional Practice Course. Esmonde O'Briain has taught in the School of Architecture at UCD and is a member of the RIAI Healthcare Design Committee.

[www.obriainbeary.ie](http://www.obriainbeary.ie)

#### **O'DONNELL + TUOMEY ARCHITECTS**

Established in 1988, O'Donnell + Tuomey have been involved with urban design, cultural and educational buildings, houses and housing projects

in Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK. The work of the practice has been widely published and exhibited and won more than 50 awards, including the RIAI Gold Medal in 2005 and 7 AAI Downes Medals. Shiela O'Donnell and John Tuomey have taught at the School of Architecture in UCD since 1980 and also as visiting lecturers in many schools in Europe and America. John Tuomey is Professor of Architectural Design at UCD. In 2010 they were elected as Honorary Fellows of the American Institute of Architects. The An Gaeltaras project and the Lyric Theatre project were both finalists for the RIBA Stirling Prize.

[www.odonnell-tuomey.ie](http://www.odonnell-tuomey.ie)

#### **O'MAHONY PIKE**

O'Mahony Pike Architects is an architecture and urban design masterplanning consultancy with offices in Dublin, Cork and London. Established in 1992, the practice focuses on humane contemporary design that is innovative yet functional, sustainable yet economical and elegant yet respectful. Significant emphasis is placed on delivering value for clients and on nurturing long term working relationships. Over the years the practice has acquired extensive experience in the design and delivery of large scale Residential, Mixed Use and Commercial developments and also operates successfully in the Healthcare, Education and Leisure sectors. OMP has concentrated on the emerging practice of Urban Design and have completed multi-disciplinary masterplans ranging in scale from city extensions and district regeneration proposals to townscape studies, area action plans and urban infill projects.

[www.omparchitects.com](http://www.omparchitects.com)

#### **OPW ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES**

OPW Architectural Services is the premier State architectural practice, and provides the full range of architectural services in connection with the portfolio of existing State properties, historic and contemporary, and with new construction projects, both directly for the State and for bodies promoted or assisted by the State, as in the case of the Heritage Council Headquarters.

[www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie)

#### **PAUL KEOGH ARCHITECTS**

Since the formation of PKA in 1984, Paul Keogh Architects has acquired a reputation for design excellence and the highest standards of professional service. The work of the practice spans the breadth of design disciplines architecture, interiors and urban design and includes commissions of every scale, from small one-off projects to major public works. With an extensive portfolio of completed buildings, projects and awards, PKA has established itself as one of the leading firms of architects in Ireland today, with an acknowledged expertise across a wide range of work including urban design, housing, education, culture, civic and retail design.

[www.pka.ie](http://www.pka.ie)

#### **SHAFFREY ASSOCIATES**

Shaffrey Associates was established in 1967 by Patrick and Maura Shaffrey. The practice has undertaken architectural, urban design and planning projects throughout Ireland

and possesses a wide knowledge of Irish towns and cities. Architectural work includes the conservation, adaptation and extension of historic buildings and new buildings in existing urban settings. Urban design and planning practice centres on the integration of new and existing urban fabric and public spaces to facilitate social and physical diversity. The principles of sustainable building and development have always informed the work of the practice and recent projects help to further explore this important aspect of architecture and planning.

[www.shaffrey.ie](http://www.shaffrey.ie)

### **SOLEARTH**

Solearth Architecture, founded in 1998, is a professional architecture practice at the forefront of innovative sustainable design in Ireland. It is a collaborative partnership between Brian O'Brien and Mike Haslam, two architects who are passionate about ecology and architecture. Environmental sustainability has been the core of the practice philosophy since 1998 with the practice being fortunate enough to have designed many of Ireland's exemplar green projects, many of which have received awards and boast satisfied users. Solearth design new and renovated buildings to serve community, cultural, institutional and educational functions and the practice has a particular interest in urban reuse, interpretation, contemplation and reflection and child centred projects.

[www.solearth.com](http://www.solearth.com)

### **URBAN INITIATIVES**

Urban Initiatives presents a unique innovative approach to urban design, transport, regeneration and development, in focusing on the complex interaction between land use, movement, networks and the funding and implementation process. Founded in 1989, Urban Initiatives has developed into one of the UK's leading urban planning and design consultancies, with a highly successful track record in delivering achievable solutions for both public and private sector clients. The practice operates across the full planning spectrum from the strategic concerns at metropolitan, city and district level to the specific problems at local area, street and building scales, and in a diversity of roles from the overall strategy through to conceptual design, technical resolution, economic appraisal and implementation.

[www.urbaninitiatives.co.uk](http://www.urbaninitiatives.co.uk)

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